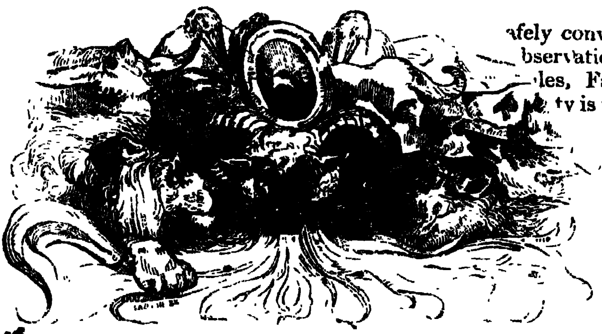


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INTRODUCTION.



GENERALLY speaking, our love of Fables is acquired during childhood, when the mind is full of the wonders of which Nature is every day presenting some new example, and when, consequently, we are greatly inclined to believe all that we hear or read, to be literally true. This, no doubt, is one reason why, in after life, persons are sometimes disposed to look upon Fables as childish in themselves, and not the best means of affording instruction to youth. It was this that induced Jean Jacques Rousseau to reject Fables from among the sources of literary enjoyment fit to be put into the hands of children. Some of the ablest of our own writers, however, have shewn the fallacy of the objection, and proved that it is not because they are implicitly believed, that Fables acquire a hold on the affections of the young; but because of their truth to Nature, and their finding a ready response in the hearts of those who have not yet learned to look upon creation as made up of classes, which have feelings and sentiments so at variance with each other, that what merely affects one, is entitled to no sympathy or consideration from the others. The belief in Fables is thus connected with our best and purest feelings. It contains the germ of the doctrine of *Universal Love,* upon which Christianity itself was founded, and on which it still subsists. Rousseau was certainly in error when he imagined that children were likely to be seriously misled in reading that birds, animals, and inanimate things could think and converse like rational beings, and might thus be induced to form false notions of the world and its uses. Children on those points are sounder philosophers than he who thus mis-represented them. They believe only so much of the truth of the apologues presented to them, as depict natural feelings, thoughts and consequences; and which they would have believed without an apologue;—namely, that the variations observable in living forms, extend no further than to outward circumstances and differences; while the vital

, justice and sympathy, are the same in every link throughout ...versal being. And this is a creed which no one would willingly ...ress. It is the same which our moralists and preachers have ...es; the same which our poets have sung ever since the invention of verse. Our own Shakspere has given a beautiful summary of its tenets in the lines:—

> ———"The poor beetle that we tread upon,
> In corporal sufferance feels as great a pang,
> As when a giant dies."

As a test of the value of Fables, it may be remarked that he who has formed a love for them when a child, is very rarely tempted to despise them in maturer age. And why should he despise them? When the bent of the mind and taste have become fixed, it would be ingratitude to look back with scorn or unkindness upon the means by which both were nurtured. Fables are, in fact, admirably calculated to make lasting impressions on the minds of all persons; but especially those which are unformed and uncultivated; and to convey to them moral instruction, in the most agreeable form. Hence it is, that this species of composition enjoys such great popularity, not only with children, but among all rude and only partially civilized people:—the same means of instruction which in one state of society are used for the information of men, being left, in a more advanced state, to perform the same office for children.

The origin of Fables is lost in the mist of remote antiquity. Our earliest information concerning them dates nearly three thousand years before our present era, and leaves us to infer, from the manner in which it occurs, that they were then familiar, from having been long previously in use. The first specimen with which we are acquainted, is the Parable of Jotham, contained in the Bible, (Judges, ix. 7—15.) inserted at page 53 of the present collection, under the title of "The Trees and the Bramble." The purposes for which such Parables, or Fables, (for the words are synonimous,) were first employed, and the way in which they originated, are by no means difficult of comprehension. "They appear," says an admirable writer on the subject, "to have arisen among a people, who as hunters or shepherds—most probably the latter—had ample opportunities of observing the conduct of certain animals towards each other. Some of the facts must have struck them as analogous to the conduct of men to men; and when such conduct among their companions happened to come under their notice, they would naturally quote the illustration, for the sake of the instruction or reproof it conveyed. Besides, in a limited society, this method of conveying warning or reproof was perhaps the only one which could be applied without offence. It must soon have been clear to those reflective minds which have existed among all people, and in all ages, that it was desirable to adopt some form of instruction which might insinuate the truth, and beguile men into goodness, without giving just cause of offence to any. In this case, the apologue was evidently the most obvious and simple resource; extracting from the common objects by which men were surrounded, and from the animals which were familiar to them, lessons of instruction, warning, and reproof. There is also a charm attending this mode of instruction which is almost peculiar to it, and which must have procured for Fables a strong preference from the rude men to whom they were originally addressed: this is, that they gratify the activity of the human mind, by affording it an opportunity of exercising its own penetration, in discovering that which the Fable partially veils."

Hence it occurs, that in eastern countries, where the government of the people is still despotic, and flattery alone is considered fit for the ears of those in power, a

Fable is almost the only medium through which the truth can be safely conveyed to a ruler. On this point, Sir John Malcolm has the following observation in his 'History of Persia.'—"The Persians, as a nation, delight in Tales, Fables and Apophthegms; the reason of which appears obvious: for where liberty is unknown, and power in all its shapes is despotic, knowledge must be veiled to be useful. The ear of a despot would be wounded by the expression of a direct truth; and genius itself must condescend to appear in that form in which alone its superiority would be tolerated."—As a confirmation of this, it is remarkable that Æsop and Phædrus, the most eminent Fabulists of antiquity, are both said to have been slaves. Indeed the apologue seems to be the most natural form in which a slave would convey reproof or instruction to his master.

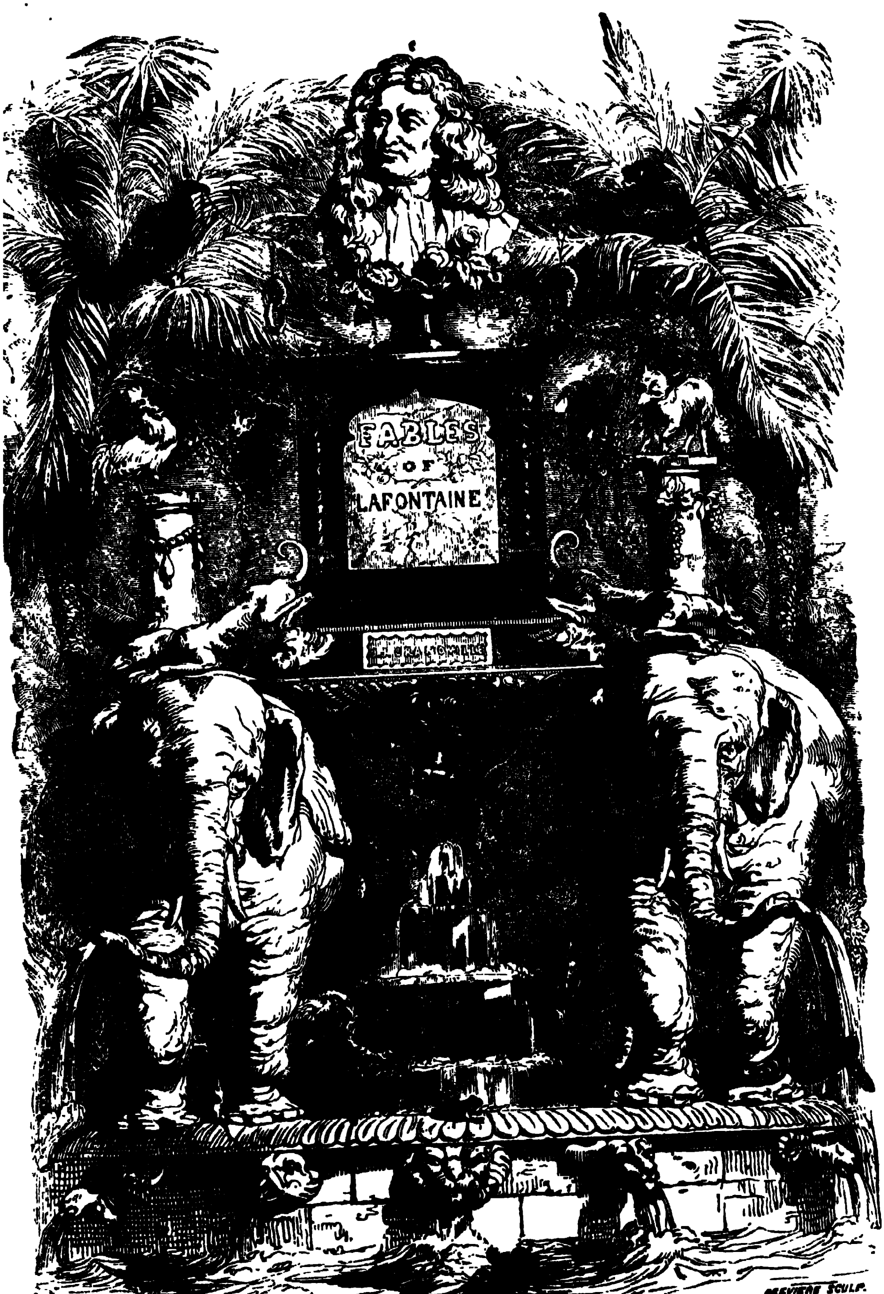
It is to the East we must without doubt turn for the earliest Fables, and probably for many, if not most, of those which have been attributed to Æsop and others. Several have been distinctly traced through the modern and ancient nations of Europe to Hindostan, the chief well-head of Oriental literature. Nor is their transmission from such a distant source a whit more surprising than that of many of our arts, and much of our scientific and philosophical knowledge; which has been undoubtedly derived from the same remote quarter. On examining the subject, we learn that the Persians, a literary people, had much intercourse with India, even in the most ancient times, and they in turn were familiar with the Greeks, among whom the first European Fabulists appeared. It is thus obvious that the Greeks might obtain from the Persians a knowledge of what the latter had drawn from India. The Romans again derived their learning from the Greeks, and transmitted it to the various races which were in alliance with, or in subjection to them. For modern times, however, there was another and more immediate channel, not subjected to the same changes and revolutions, to the same capricious alterations or embellishments, as sometimes adorned and sometimes disfigured the fictions of the countrymen of Homer and of Virgil. The Arabians had greater intercourse with the Persians than any European people; they had also some dealings with India, and even with China; and it is easy to perceive that the popular Tales and Fables which they acquired from these sources, together with many of their own, would naturally be disseminated among the Europeans during the early Catholic pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and the wars of the Crusaders; and still more so during the long and peaceful occupation by the Arabs of the most fertile provinces of Spain.

That a great number of our popular Fables have been so acquired becomes perfectly apparent, on a superficial examination of the circumstances to which they refer. The intrinsic evidence they afford of their origin, though probably altered considerably in the progress of transmission from one nation to another, is not to be mistaken, as relating to the peculiar manners, opinions and productions of the different countries in which they arose. Thus the Fable of the "Man and his two Wives," see page 319, in which the elder wife deprives her husband of his black, and the younger of his white hairs, till he has none left, evidently originated in a country where polygamy was allowed, and was aimed at some of the absurdities and inconveniences of that practice. The numerous Fables extant about wolves and sheep, may be referred to a pastoral people, such as those of ancient Greece or Syria. To the Greeks of a later date, belong the Fable of "Mercury and the Statuary," and those in which the Gods are introduced with the attributes assigned to them by the poets. The apologues in which wild monkeys, apes, and elephants appear, may be ascribed to India; while those relating to camels and gazelles, seem referable to Arabia. Many of the Fables in which the nightingale is mentioned, may, in like manner, be traced to Persia, which is pre-eminently the land of the nightingale. Vegetable products mentioned in Fables, also indicate

frequently from what country they have sprung, or through which they have passed in reaching us; as the cedar, the olive, the pine-apple, and the pomegranate.

In pronouncing upon the native land of a Fable from this kind of evidence, however, we must be careful to exclude from the list all those of modern growth; not merely because the origin of most of them is known, but because the diffusion of knowledge among Europeans has become so extensive, that scholars have nearly as great facilities for forming an intimate acquaintance with the animals and other peculiar productions, manners, customs, and costume of distant countries, as with those of their own. This, no doubt, will tend more and more, as society advances, and as dates become confused by time, to render intrinsic evidence of less value than it has been, or now is; but there will always be considerable utility in this testimony. No one for instance, will ever mistake the well known Fable of the "Consultation of Tradesmen," respecting the building of a city wall, to belong to any country, but such as had Municipal Institutions at the date of its composition. It is said to have been derived from the Dutch;—the people who first obtained civil freedom in modern times, unless indeed we call the government of the despotic oligarchy of Venice, freedom.—And again, no critic will have the least hesitation in saying that "The Elephant and the Bookseller," could not have emanated from India.

The invention of Fables is claimed for the Hindoos by their own traditions, together with that of decimal operations in figures, and the game of chess. It is supposed, however, that they have no apologues so ancient as those contained in the Bible; though, as they have Fables coeval with the earliest writings in their language, it is probably the want of an accurate chronology only which renders us unwilling to concede to them the precedence. Long before the period assigned to the first recorded Fable, the Arabian and Egyptian merchants had established an intercourse with Hindostan, and had no doubt profited from their superior learning, as well as from their commerce; and Moses, and through him the Israelites, one of whom, as before stated, was the author of the first known Fable, were skilled in the learning of the Egyptians. Be this as it may, however, it has been ascertained beyond controversy, that many of the Greek narratives relating to their gods and early fabulous heroes, were originally found in Hindoo tradition: which has also supplied materials for many of the popular stories of all the modern nations of Europe. The old Italian, Spanish and French novelists, the poets, our own Chaucer, even Shakspere, have all been indebted to Hindostan for some of their delightful fictions. The story of "the pound of flesh," which forms the main incident in the exquisite play of "The Merchant of Venice," the source of which so long baffled the research of critics and antiquaries, has of late years been distinctly traced to the East. Our nursery tales of "Jack the Giant Killer," "Whittington and his Cat," and several others, were current among oriental story-tellers for centuries before they were known in England. Many of our proverbs and jests also, are importations from the same quarter. The Chinese and the Indians have been laughing for thousands of years at jokes which we, in our simplicity, have long set down to the credit of one facetious Master Joseph Miller. The earliest known collection of Eastern Fables and Apologues, which, it may be remarked, does *not* bear out the claim to antiquity which has been made for Indian Fable, is the Hindoo work called *Pancha Tantra*, or the *Five Sections*, which has formed the groundwork of the various collections known in Europe as the Fables of Pilpay, and which, even in India, has been abridged, and in some instances altered by omission and substitution. The original work has never been translated into English; but the epitome, which is called *Hitópadésa*, or *Salutary Instruction*, has been rendered by Sir William Jones and Sir Charles Wilkins. Both collections consist of prose and poetry intermixed. The name


FABLES
OF
LAFONTAINE
FRANCAIS DEL.
BREVIERE SCULP.

FABLES;

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED,

BY THE MOST ESTEEMED

EUROPEAN AND ORIENTAL AUTHORS:

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY DISSERTATION ON THE HISTORY OF FABLE,

COMPRISING BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF THE MOST EMINENT FABULISTS;

BY G. MOIR BUSSEY.

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS, DESIGNED

BY J. J. GRANDVILLE,

"Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee."

JOB, ch. XII.

LONDON:

WILLOUGHBY & Co., 97, ST. JOHN STREET, SMITHFIELD,

LONDON:
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of the authors of both are entirely unknown. Most probably they were not wholly the work of one writer; but a compilation from the works of many, as also appears to have been the case with most of the oriental collections of apophthegms and tales—among others, of the great collections known as the 'Antar,' which competent critics have considered as the type of all our romances of chivalry, and 'The Arabian Nights' Entertainments.' Vishnu Sarman, who is sometimes called the author of the Hitôpadêsa, is merely one of the characters introduced to preserve the continuity of the work, and relate the Fables. The Pancha Tantra appears, from the evidence adduced by Mr. H. Hayman Wilson, to have been composed towards the end of the fifth, or the beginning of the sixth century of the Christian era; the Hitôpadêsa followed close upon this, and the version from it, which goes by the name of Bidpai, or rather Pilpay, which is merely a corruption of the former, was made about two centuries later. The brief account given of this work by Dr. Robertson in his 'Disquisition concerning Ancient India,' is as follows:—"*Heeto-pades*, or *Amicable Instruction*, is a series of Fables, interspersed with moral, prudential and political maxims. This work is in such high esteem throughout the East, that it has been translated into every language spoken there. These Fables, having made their way into Europe, have been circulated with additions and alterations, under the names of Pilpay and Æsop." Sir William Jones, in his 'Third Discourse of the Hindoos,' says that the Hitôpadêsa was "first translated from the Sanscrit in the sixth century, by order of Buzerchumihr, or Bright as the Sun, the chief physician, and afterwards Vizier of the great Anúshirèván; and it is extant under various names in more than twenty languages." He adds, "As the very existence of Æsop, whom the Arabs believe to have been an Abyssinian, appears rather doubtful, I am not disinclined to suppose that the first moral Fables which appeared in Europe, were of Indian or Ethiopian origin."

The Persians, however, dispute with the Hindoos the honour of giving birth to Fable. Sir John Malcolm in his 'Sketches of Persia,' relates a conversation which he held on the subject with one who appears to have been exceedingly jealous of his country's reputation in this respect. "It appears to me," said Sir John, "that the greater part of your tales are taken literally from the Hindoos."—"Is it not as likely," was the reply, "that they have stolen theirs from us?"—"No," said the Englishman, "for their works are much older than any you have."—"That may be," retorted the Persian; "but they are not older than Keiomerth, Housheng, or Jemsheed. These flourished in the glorious days of Persia, and no doubt it was in their time that the wily Hindoos stole our stories; and if our conquering swords have since made us masters of India, and we have plundered a few tales along with other articles, why, we have only recovered our own."

The most celebrated Persian collection is that of Saadi, a native of Shiraz, containing a mixture of Fables, such as we receive under that designation,—tales and apophthegms, in prose and poetry, called the *Gulistan*, or *Rose Garden*. This work is the most popular throughout Persia, and has been translated into almost all the European languages, and amongst others into our own, by Mr. Gladwin. It has been said that "there is no literary name in England—not even that of Shakspere—the popularity of which admits of the least comparison with that of Saadi. His name and his sayings are as household words throughout the nation; from the king on his throne to the muleteer by the wayside. The latter, in answering your remonstrances, and even the beggar, in soliciting alms, will give utterance to some appropriate passage from the Gulistan, and would probably, if asked, and will often without asking, repeat verbatim the stories and anecdotes it contains. In fact to be instructed in this work, forms an essential

part of education, and those without education contrive to get their memories well stored with choice passages from it." The influence which this popular Eastern moralist has exerted upon the people of Persia it would be difficult now to calculate. There can be no doubt, however, that the nation is greatly indebted to it for even the small advances in refinement of manners, rectitude of thought, and honesty of feeling, which it has made, in spite of the debasing circumstances which form the chief materials of its history. It has operated alike upon prince and people;—on the one hand to restrain the tyrannic exercise of unbounded power, by shewing that such exercise conduces but little to the happiness of any one, and occasionally provokes retribution; and on the other, by softening the asperities of character, and infusing a degree of cheerfulness into the popular mind, which partially disarms despotism, and renders its aspect less odious. Two or three specimens from the Gulistan will be found in the body of this work.

Fables first became known in the West, through the collections ascribed to Æsop, which, next to those in the Bible, are the most ancient with which we are acquainted. It has been already shewn that many of them were derived from the East in the first instance, and have merely undergone the alterations which they would have been subject to in the course of translation and adaptation to the manners and notions of another race, in the hands of him to whom their invention is now generally ascribed. And this is rendered more probable by the almost universal tradition that Æsop was an Ethiopian slave,—not a native of the country in which his Fables were disseminated. The matter, however, from the remote date to which it has reference, and the scarcity of trustworthy authorities on the subject, is full of difficulty; and this has been further increased by the inventions and interpolations of monastic authors before the invention of printing. The popular account of the life of Æsop is derived from Maximus Planudes, a monk of Constantinople, who in the fourteenth century made a collection of Greek Fables under the name of Æsop, and prefixed thereto a Memoir purporting to be a biography of the author. Planudes has described the Fabulist as being of black complexion, with thick lips and splay feet, and has mixed up the apparently authentic incidents of his life with many improbable, if not impossible adventures, and much idle buffoonery. It is by no means certain, however, that Planudes designed any fraud in this picture. In the works of the oriental philosopher Lokman, he must have found the same Fables, with many others, as those ascribed to Æsop; and it was easy to confound the persons of the two authors, when their productions were identical. Lokman is said by Mohammedan writers to have been contemporary with the Jewish kings, David and Solomon; but Eastern chronology is little to be depended upon. The correspondence between the personal history of Lokman and Æsop, however, even in admitted particulars, and the similarity of their writings, are too great to have been purely accidental; and render it highly probable that the names belong to one and the same person. The anachronisms of Planudes have thrown the greatest suspicion upon his work. He makes Æsop quote Euripides, who was not in existence till nearly eighty years after the death of the former, and speaks of the Piræus as the port of Athens, although it was not constructed till upwards of half a century later. Demades, a rival of Demosthenes, who lived a hundred and fifty years after Æsop, is the subject of one of his Fables, and in the moral of another, there is mention of the monastic orders, which were not instituted till nearly a thousand years after the alleged author's death. These things, however, do not furnish so much evidence against the genuineness of the collection of Planudes as may at first sight appear. Many of the Fables may have been transmitted orally, and only reduced to writing by persons using them in illustration of subjects on which they were supposed to have a bearing. They would thus have been corrupted from defect of memory

and other causes, as we see proverbs, aphorisms, and quotations from our most celebrated poets, moralists, and historians, corrupted at the present day, notwithstanding the almost incalculable superiority we possess in the printing-press for preserving the integrity of an author's text. Those, therefore, who reject the testimony of Planudes, should do so only after consideration of the circumstances under which his collection was made, and his biography written—with little, perhaps, but contradictory materials at hand, and a great portion of those derived from popular tradition, which almost always imparts to its preservations something of the marvellous, although it never wholly loses sight of the truth. If Planudes were really the author of the Fables in his collection, which bear internal evidence of a later age than that of Æsop, we must demur to the justice of those who have pronounced him a mean and contemptible writer. There is certainly as much wit, truth and humour, in those considered spurious, as in those to which the commentators have set their seal of authenticity. It is not sought to be contended, however, that the god Mercury ever paid Æsop a visit, as asserted by Philostratus,—though this seems to be a version of the "Choice of Wisdom," by king Solomon, thus bearing out the identity of Æsop with Lokman, rather than a pure invention,—or that the Fabulist was engaged in two battles, or wrote two books, after he was dead.

The notices derived from the best classical authorities describe Æsop to have flourished in the time of Solon and Pisistratus, about the middle of the sixth century before the time of our Saviour. His birth-place, like that of Homer, has been greatly disputed. Sardis in Lydia, the isle of Samos, Mesembria in Thrace, and Cotiæum, a city of Phrygia, in Lesser Asia, have severally claimed the honour; but Phrygia seems best entitled to it. In youth he is reported to have been first a shepherd's boy, and afterwards a slave. His first master was Caresias, an Athenian, in whose service Æsop was enabled to acquire a correct knowledge of the purest Greek; and here he probably first caught the idea of Fabular composition from the mode then in general use, of conveying instruction through the medium of moral sentences and proverbs.

From that of Caresias, Æsop passed into the service of Xanthus, a Samian, who is mentioned by Planudes as a philosopher, but is made to figure rather as a foil to his slave, than as a man of learning or genius. The third master of the Fabulist was Iadmon or Idmon, another Samian, surnamed the Wise. In this service, Æsop had the celebrated Rhodopis either for his fellow-slave, or his wife,—the ancient authors do not seem to have agreed which. This Rhodopis afterwards became exceedingly wealthy, and Herodotus says she made a noble present to the temple of Delphi of a tenth of her substance; in addition to which we are told by Pliny, that she built one of the Pyramids of Egypt—an undertaking which, however, is altogether unlikely. Iadmon was so greatly pleased with the wit and wisdom of Æsop, that after two or three years, the latter was enfranchised by him.

He now became celebrated throughout Greece for the species of composition which from him was called Æsopian, and was solicited by Crœsus, King of Lydia, to take up his abode at the court of that monarch, in the city of Sardis. Here he is said to have met with Solon and Chilo, and to have displayed more wit, if not more wisdom, than either of them. On one occasion Crœsus, having shewn the three sages the great splendour and magnificence of his palace, which from the description of old historians must have equalled the luxurious pomp, of which we now only catch glimpses in oriental fairy tales, asked, "Who they considered the happiest man?" Solon, whose philosophy was derived from the severe Greek school, which could admit of no courtly flattery to wealth or power, cited two instances of men who deserved happiness, and who had been, according to

his notions, eminently favoured by fortune. The first was that of Tellus, a poor Athenian, of great virtue and wisdom, who after distinguishing himself by his care for, and education of his family, lost his life in defending his country. The other was the case of two brothers, who for their remarkable filial piety were taken to Elysium by the gods, without undergoing the pangs of death or separation. Solon assigned as his reason for avoiding to notice living persons, that no man could be certainly pronounced happy till his mortal pilgrimage was completed. Æsop, perceiving that the king was not well satisfied with this answer, said, "For my part I am well satisfied that Crœsus is as pre-eminent above other men for happiness, as the sea is pre-eminent over all rivers." The compliment was greedily swallowed by the monarch, and he exclaimed in the ecstacy of the moment, "The Phrygian has hit the mark!"—an expression which subsequently passed into a proverb. When, shortly afterwards, Solon departed from Sardis, Æsop accompanied him part of his homeward journey, and took occasion to explain to him the reason of his conduct. "Solon!" he said, "we must either remain silent before kings, or we must give utterance to such words as will soothe and gratify them."—"Nay," replied his more unyielding companion, "we should either hold our peace, or speak to them the most homely truth. How else should they come by good and useful counsel?"

Æsop seems indeed to have been a good courtier on all occasions; a character he would have been likely to acquire during the years he passed in slavery. Having visited Athens soon after Pisistratus had, by his artful practices upon the people, been invested with the supreme authority, and finding the citizens restive and impatient under their self-imposed burden, the philosopher composed the Fable of "The Frogs demanding a King," in order to convince them that a change would very probably be for the worse, and that their present complaints were unreasonable. It is pretty certain that Pisistratus was not a bad prince; but had Æsop been a free-born Greek, and participated in the Grecian enthusiasm for liberty, his Fable would rather have been directed against the ambition of the sovereign, than against the complaints of the people.

Plutarch, in his 'Feast of the Sages,' supposed to be held at the court of Periander, of Corinth, has given us a lively picture of Æsop's manners and conversation, preserved probably in traditions which were not very remote from the fact. He is there represented as one of the gayest, and most amusing, though at the same time the most satirical of the social company. Alexidemus, the natural son of the tyrant of Miletus, having taken offence at being placed lower at the table of Periander, their entertainer, than "Æolians, and Islanders, and people known to nobody," was rebuked by Æsop, who related the Fable of "The Arrogant Mule." The tables being cleared, and garlands distributed to the guests, the conversation turned upon music, the use of which, in the solemn worship of the gods, was severely censured by Anacharsis, a Scythian. Æsop, to prevent any serious dispute arising, turned the matter off with a jest, and afterwards took ample revenge upon Anacharsis, by designating the moveable habitations of his countrymen as carts, and asserting that they were incapable of governing their houses, inasmuch as they had none to govern. Much of the same kind of heavy pleasantry ensues; the most marked feature of which, as regards the Fabulist, is his excessive courtesy, and even gallantry; his preference for monarchical over republican governments; and his strong sense of the deference due to the opinions of princes.

The author of the life of Æsop prefixed to Mr. Dodsley's collection of Fables, has an ingenious comparison, which is not unworthy of attention. "It appears upon the whole," he says, "that Æsop's conversation consisted of a mixture of humour wit, mirth and good-nature: and the adopting or making of Fables

upon the spur, as occasions arose. He was, perhaps, a man as full of wit and humour as our celebrated Dr. Swift; for he scarcely ever speaks without exercising one or other of those talents. He might possibly have been as satirical too; though in a more gay and less disobliging manner. Indeed, his good-nature is pointed out as strongly as any part of his character. His wisdom itself was gay and cheerful; and it was for that very reason that he has been so often preferred to all the seven sages of Greece. He was free and open in his discourse, for, in the before mentioned 'Feast of the Sages,' he speaks frequently: and though there were so many in company, and of high rank and figure, he has in a manner the first and last word in their conversation."

Among the sayings of Æsop which have been deemed worthy of preservation, is one on the miseries of mankind. "Prometheus," he is reported to have said, "having taken earth to form mankind, moistened and tempered it, not with water, but with tears." His answer to Chilo, who, when he was at the court of Crœsus, asked him one day, "What God was doing?" has been thought wonderful by M. Bayle, who descants largely upon it. "God is depressing the proud, and exalting the humble," replied Æsop:—an answer which it is scarcely too much to say, may be considered not only wonderful, but prophetic, as anticipatory of the doctrines of Christianity.

The last service in which Æsop was engaged, was an embassy from Crœsus to Delphi, in which a large sum of money was entrusted to him, with directions to offer the most magnificent sacrifices to Apollo, and to distribute four minæ of silver (about twelve pounds sterling) to every citizen when he had done. During his residence here, however, he grew excessively disgusted with the profligate manners and lax morality of the Delphians, and expressed his sentiments as freely as he had conceived them. Among other things he reproached them with their idleness and extravagance, which led them to neglect both agriculture and commerce to such a degree that "but for the great concourse of strangers to their city, and the vast offerings made in their temple, the inhabitants would soon have been reduced to beggary and starvation." So great was his displeasure that after he had performed the sacrifices which Crœsus had enjoined, instead of distributing the money intended for the people, he returned it to his patron, alleging that the Delphians were unworthy of such liberality. The disappointed citizens were irritated beyond measure, and consulting together how they might be revenged, it was finally agreed upon to lay a plot for his life.

Having nothing now to detain him, he set out on his return to Sardis; but messengers were despatched after him, and he was arrested near Phocis, and charged with sacrilege. On search being made, one of the golden vessels, consecrated to the service of Apollo, which his enemies had concealed among his baggage, for the purpose of getting up this accusation, was found, and he was immediately conducted back to Delphi, where, amid the execrations of the populace, he was thrust into prison, tried, condemned, and sentenced to be precipitated from the rock of Hyampia—the usual punishment of those convicted of sacrilege.

As his persecutors were about to throw him from the rock, he solicited and obtained permission to address the assembled multitude. His defence was expressed in a Fable—that of "The Hare, the Eagle, the Hornet, and Jupiter," the object of which was to shew that the strongest is not always secure from the vengeance of the weak. The Delphians, however, were not to be moved by Fable, moral, or any other consideration, but clamoured the more loudly for his death as it seemed to be delayed; and he was, at length, hurled from the frightful precipice.

The writers who relate this, add, that Heaven, in retribution for the foul and treacherous murder they had perpetrated, afflicted the Delphians with a pestilence, of which a great number of persons died; their cattle were stricken with disease,

and their land reduced to barrenness. In consequence of these distresses, and in obedience to the injunction of the oracle, which had declared that the unjust death of Æsop was the cause, the guilty citizens caused proclamation to be made at all public assemblies throughout the realms of Greece, that they were willing to make compensation for the murder, to any person who might be entitled, by kindred or otherwise, to claim it. A grandson of Iadmon, the former master of the philosopher, at length applied for and received the money; no one more nearly connected with him having appeared during the years which had elapsed between the first proclamations and the period of payment. The last circumstance of this strange history rests upon the authority of Herodotus, which has occasioned it to be said, that as the event "must have taken place, if not within the knowledge of the historian, at least within the memory of many with whom he might have conversed, we cannot doubt the truth of the relation."

The exact period of Æsop's death is uncertain. It appears, however, from the best authorities, to have been in the fifty-seventh or fifty-eighth Olympiad, between the years 550 and 544, before the Christian era.

Those authors who reject the authority of Planudes, as being altogether fictitious or unsatisfactory, have reversed his notion that Æsop was an ill-favoured personage, and invested him with great personal attractions; in the same way as some of our historians, since the appearance of Buck's work, and Walpole's 'Historic Doubts,' have contended that Richard the Third, the crook-backed tyrant of Shakspere, was the handsomest scion of the house of York. Of Æsop and Rhodopis, it is said by the writer of Mr. Dodsley's 'Life,' before quoted, that "there is some reason to imagine they were a remarkably handsome couple: for, as she is said to have had her name from the beauty of her complexion, he seems to have his from the particular sparkling of his eyes." The same author, in another place, adds: "If we were to follow probability rather than the assertions of some writers in the lower ages, I should be more apt to think that Æsop was of a handsome countenance and shape, than ugly and deformed, notwithstanding the general prepossession to the contrary, which has prevailed for the last three or four centuries."

Stobæus, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century after Christ, and, consequently, above nine hundred years after the reputed death of Æsop, is the first writer who speaks of the sour visage of Æsop; Planudes, the first who mentions that he was mis-shapen in body, and resembled an Ethiop. The chief authority on the other side, is that of Philostratus, who, in an account of some pictures extant in the time of the Antonines, A.D. 138 to 179, speaks of one in which Æsop was represented sitting in front of his own house, attended by the three presiding geniuses of Fable, who were crowning him with wreaths of flowers, and branches of olive, and surrounded by men, animals, and birds, the subjects of his Fables—among which, one of the most conspicuous objects was the fox, of which the fabulist has made so much use in his apologues. In this, the countenance of Æsop is said to have been represented as "partly pleasant, and partly grave; with a pleasing smile upon it, and with his eyes fixed upon the ground, as being then composing a Fable."

We cannot help thinking, that this is quite as slender authority for saying that Æsop was handsome, or that he was not plain and deformed, as Stobæus and Planudes could have had for asserting the contrary. Surely the face of an Ethiop, however opposed to our notions of beauty, and notwithstanding any dwarfishness or disproportion of body, may have been occasionally "partly pleasant, and partly grave; with a pleasing smile upon it:" and his eyes may have been "particularly sparkling," without the owner being possessed of all other personal charms. And even if this were deficient in the original, "the flattering limner" would have

been sure to impart it. But to what conceivable end is it necessary that Æsop should have been a handsome man? Such a qualification, whatever effect it might have had in extending his popularity among ladies in his own day, would in nowise have contributed to his immortality; which, then as now, depended upon a higher and more durable kind of beauty than that of sparkling eyes, and a pleasant countenance—we mean that of the mind.

The opinion of the classical authors of antiquity upon the Fables of Æsop may be inferred from the facts—that Socrates, while in prison, translated "such of them as he knew" into verse; though, it may be added, without greatly improving them by the process: and Plato, who banishes even the delightful fictions of Homer and Hesiod from his Republic, recommends the study of the Fables of Æsop. Quintilian speaks of them as highly useful in the instruction of children; and Philostratus calls them "more proper than all other fictions to inspire us with wisdom." Plutarch mentions Æsop among the authors proper to be studied, to form the mind of a philosopher; and Phædrus, who translated many of his Fables, and has imitated him in others, calls him the *Sage*, and says that "he saw through all nature." The Athenians, from the example of Socrates and Plato, became such great admirers of Æsop, that they employed the celebrated sculptor, Lysippus, the contemporary of Apelles, to erect a statue to his memory; and the book said to have been written by him, was generally one of the first read by their youth, and one of the last laid aside by their old men. During the most brilliant period of their literary history, when Aristotle, Plato, and Xenophon flourished together, the "Drolleries of Æsop" formed the delight of all classes, being repeated, like the jests of our *bon vivants*, at convivial parties, or the private festive table. It was a proverbial expression among them, when a man was deficient of ready wit, or appeared ignorant in matters of prudence or worldly philosophy, "that he had never read Æsop."

Notwithstanding all this, however, there are strong doubts whether Æsop was really the author of any of the Fables attributed to him. The same pieces, as we have before shewn, are said, by oriental scholars, to have been current in India from the very earliest ages, long before the period assigned to the Greek author; and this gives the strongest countenance to the tradition, that Æsop himself was, if not a native of the East, at least the descendant of an Eastern slave, whom the Greeks, in their ignorance of geography, would have called an Ethiop. The Fables being for the first time translated into the Greek language, would naturally be ascribed to him who made them known; and thus we have the work of Æsop, in which the labours of many men are most likely blended.

At all events, there is not the slightest ground for believing that the Fables which are published as Æsop's were really of his composition. They are contributions of different ages and countries, which, for the convenience of editors and others, have been placed from time to time under one general head: in the same way as several divisions of an army, notwithstanding that they may consist of troops of various nations, are put under the command of one General-in-chief. The total number of the Greek Æsopian prose Fables, is two hundred and ninety-seven. The collection of Planudes, which was first printed at Milan in 1480, soon after the art of printing was introduced into Italy, consists of a hundred and forty-nine; to which Neveletus in his Frankfort edition, in 1610, added a hundred and thirty-six, from some ancient manuscripts in the library of Heidelberg. It may be remarked, that these manuscripts contain not one of the Fables published by Planudes; and that the editor had no hesitation in ascribing the whole collection to different hands. The best criterion we have for the antiquity of the disputed collections, is the books of Phædrus, wherein he professes to translate the greater portion of his, from those which then passed under Æsop's name.

After Æsop, the next Fabulist we know of is Phædrus, who, having been a slave in early life, was made a freeman by the Emperor Augustus. We know little of the personal history of this writer, beyond what he himself has made us acquainted with, in his prologues and Fables. His name and writings were entirely unknown until the middle of the sixteenth century, when Peter Pithœus, a French critic, of considerable eminence in his day, published the five books of Fables, called Phædrus's, from a manuscript in his, the editor's, possession. This author's Fables are in Iambic verse, and are as much valued for the purity, terseness, and elegance of their composition, as for their wit and good sense.

Flavius Avienus succeeded, in this species of writing, to Phædrus, of whom nothing more is known than that he wrote a collection of forty-two Fables, in Elegiac verse, and that he lived either about the year of our Lord, 160 or 400. His Fables have never been greatly esteemed.

Of modern Fabulists, the most eminent have been, M. de la Fontaine, the Abbé Fenelon, Mr. Gay, Mr. Robert Dodsley, and the simple-hearted Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. A number of other names might be added, not less celebrated in literature, perhaps, though not so distinguished as Fabulists.

Jean de la Fontaine, the first of French Fabulists, was born at Chateau-Thierry, on the 8th of July, 1621. Of the first years of his life we know nothing. His earliest literary essays were imitations of the celebrated Fables of antiquity, which were published after he had attained his twenty-second year, and attracted some notice for the ease and spirit with which they were written. He afterwards turned his attention to some of the mythological tales of the classic ages, which he threw into easy verse; but, although exhibiting considerable animation, much fluency of thought and expression, and great command of his native language, they never obtained any great celebrity, and would long since have been forgotten, but for the subsequent works of their author. The little success which attended these effusions, threw the writer back upon his first employment, in which he soon obtained a reputation for wit and talent, second, perhaps, to none of his day.

It has been remarked, that La Fontaine was the only distinguished Frenchman of the age of Louis the Fourteenth, who had no share in the favours so liberally conferred by that monarch upon men of genius; and that the reason for this neglect, is probably to be found in the freedom of sentiment breathed in some of his Fables. This is highly probable, as no man seems to have understood the value of freedom, personal and political, better than La Fontaine: and no man could have better known how little his countrymen enjoyed of either. In the absence of court patronage, he consoled himself with the society of Madame de Sablière, one of those beautiful women, who, in that age, were at once the patronesses and mistresses of poets, philosophers, and wits. Their houses were the clubs of the period, the common resort of princes and nobles, who contributed the necessary expenditure,—and of men of genius, who condescended to profit by the profusion thus spread around them. Scarron, Molière, St. Evrémond, Fontenelle, Le Sage, and La Fontaine, were alike dependents upon talented courtesans. The great Condé, Turenne, and Saxe, as well as the King, were their patrons and supporters.

In the house of De Sablière, La Fontaine found an asylum for nearly twenty years, which was so far fortunate for him, that it released him from the burden of providing for a household of his own; and thus equally assorted with his inactive disposition, and his incapacity for business. So thoroughly domesticated was the poet with his mistress, that once, when she had given a holiday to all her servants, she good humouredly said, that "she had retained nothing at home but her three animals,—her dog, cat, and La Fontaine."

In person, La Fontaine is said to have possessed few attractions: but to have

been affable, unassuming, and modest, without any pretensions to an intellectual physiognomy. Fontenelle, who was slightly acquainted with him, has thus described him: "A man as simple as he came from the hands of nature. In his intercourse with others, he had scarcely acquired any novel or foreign impression; and to this may be attributed his inimitable and charming naïveté." His character was as simple as his appearance and manners. He had none of those dazzling qualities which frequently lead to personal rivalry; but his conduct was upright, his heart beneficent, warm, and sincere. He died at Paris, on the 15th of March, 1695, and was buried in that city, in the cemetery of St. Joseph, beside the remains of his friend Molière, who had been interred twenty-two years before him.

The chief characteristic of La Fontaine's Fables is their exquisite humour and graceful familiarity. Few of them are original in their subject, being mostly paraphrases of Æsop and Phædrus; but their treatment is so admirable, and they contain so much simple and delicate satire, applicable to every class and variety of human life, that, since their first appearance, they have always occupied a distinguished place in the estimation of all readers, learned and unlearned, old and young.

Next in repute to La Fontaine, among Frenchmen, is Francis de Salignac de la Motte Fenelon, Archbishop and Duke of Cambray. He was born on the 6th of August, 1651, at the Castle of Fenelon, in the district of Perigord. His father was the Marquis de Fenelon; his mother, the sister of the Marquis de St. Abre. His paternal uncle, under whose care and inspection the young Francis was placed at the age of twelve, in order to finish his education at the University of Paris, was a general in the French army, "as remarkable a man for his exemplary piety and profound learning, as for his courage and conduct in the field of battle."

Under this excellent man the nephew made such progress in his clerical studies, that at the age of nineteen he preached in public with such applause, that his uncle was afraid he would grow vain and ambitious, and, therefore, forbade him to resume his discourses, till he should attain greater judgment and more mature years. At twenty-four he entered holy orders, and is said to have discharged the parochial duties which devolved upon him, with the utmost zeal and piety. At twenty-seven, the Archbishop of Paris, M. de Harley, appointed him superior of a convent of women, newly converted to the Catholic faith; an office in which he acquitted himself so well, that in the year 1686 the king nominated him chief missionary on the coast of Saintonge, and in the county of Aunis, for the conversion of the Protestants there. In this it must be mentioned, to his honour, that he entirely put a stop to the system of persecution and coercion which had previously been resorted to, in order to prevent diversity of opinion. The milder mode of Fenelon, it need scarcely be added, had a wonderful effect in preventing the growth of heresy and dissent, which previously had been spreading with considerable rapidity.

The reputation which Fenelon had obtained by his conduct, his sermons, and a 'Treatise on Education,' which he had written at the request of the Duke of Beauvilliers, for the use of the preceptors of that nobleman's daughter, induced the king in 1689, to nominate him tutor to his son, the duke of Burgundy. This was an important era in the life of the Abbé, and to it the public are indebted for his three most celebrated works, 'The Dialogues of the Dead,' 'The Adventures of Telemachus,' and his 'Tales and Fables;' all of which were written for the instruction and amusement of the young prince, his pupil. His successful diligence and care in this situation, procured for him the archbishopric of Cambray.

Soon afterwards he became acquainted with the celebrated Madame Guyon, a lady who had originated a mystical sect called *Quietists*, and whose heterodox theological tenets, supported as they were with much talent and enthusiasm by the lady and her friends, gave considerable disturbance to the church. Fenelon

defended her treatises, and openly avowed his conviction of the truth of her principles and precepts, which drew upon him, not merely the censures of the church, but banishment from the court, and the secular deprivation of his friends.

As a proof of the estimation in which the archbishop was held, however, and the extent of his reputation, it may be mentioned that, during the campaigns of the great duke of Marlborough, that general as well as prince Eugene and the duke of Ormond, gave special directions to their foraging parties to spare the fields and meadows of the author of Telemachus; and on more than one occasion, when he desired to visit a portion of his diocese in the occupation of the English, Marlborough supplied him with a princely escort from the ranks of his own army.

The cause of this universal esteem is to be found in the principles which governed his thoughts and actions. "I love my family," he would say, "better than myself, my country better than my family, and mankind still better than my country:" words which with him were not idle boasts, nor uttered as such words frequently are, merely to be talked about.

Notwithstanding his banishment from Paris, the good archbishop continued to correspond with his former pupil, and to afford him the benefit of his advice and direction. In 1712 the duke died, and Fenelon, weeping like a child, at once expressed his resignation and his intention to withdraw from active life. "If the motion of a straw would restore the prince," he exclaimed, "I would not touch it contrary to the Divine pleasure. My bonds are broken!" From this time he devoted himself to a life of religious seclusion till his death, which happened in 1715.

The character of the Fables of Fenelon may be gathered from the character of their author. They are imaginative, reflective, persuasive; but without any of that caustic severity which distinguishes the Fables of La Fontaine. They breathe a spirit of universal philanthrophy; and are not aimed at the crafty and designing, so much as at the wanton and boldly bad. They seem indeed to be addressed to the heart and understanding, rather than to the head.

John Gay, the best writer of English Fables, was born in the year 1688. He was intimate with Pope, Swift, Bolingbroke, Arbuthnot and all the most celebrated wits of the reign of Queen Anne. He is best known as an author by his 'Fables,' the 'Beggar's Opera,' and two or three ballads, among others, that of 'Black-eyed Susan.' His life was one of dependence on Court favour—one of the most unhappy and precarious that can well be imagined; but one necessarily too much identified with the history of the Court to which he was attached, to afford much interest to the reader. The extent of his preferments appears to have been the appointment at one period of Secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth, and afterwards to the Earl of Clarendon, whom he accompanied in an embassy to Holland during the reign of Anne, and with whom he returned, on the death of that princess, in the train of King George the First. His "Hare and many Friends" is said to have pourtrayed the hopes and vexatious disappointments to which he was subjected. His Fables are full of wit and satire, but are somewhat too long and complicated in their details to come up to our notions of perfection. The value of an apologue is its capacity of application to the affairs of daily life; giving us in a single sentence, an universal and healthful maxim for the conduct and guidance of all ranks and degrees. Mr. Gay seldom furnishes us with this bright and pointed weapon of attack and defence. His Fables, nevertheless, have great merit, both for their design and execution, and will never cease to be read and relished, while polished verse and sterling genius can be appreciated. Gay died in November, 1732, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. The following epitaph, written by himself, is engraved on his monument in Poet's corner.

"Life's a jest, and all things shew it:
I thought so once, but now I know it."

Pope seems from his letters, to have loved John Gay more than most men of his acquaintance.

In our estimation, Robert Dodsley stands next as a Fabulist to Gay. By force of natural talent, by honest industry, and a kindly disposition, he made his way to a literary reputation of considerable eminence, and performed much good service to the cause of letters. Dodsley was born at Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, in 1703. His parents were of humble life; his own first setting out, after a free-school education, was as footman to the Honourable Mrs. Lowther; a service which he retained till 1732, when having written a little dramatic piece of considerable talent, called 'The Toy-shop,' he was induced to leave it with Mr. Pope for his opinion, and thus acquired notice and patronage. Pope, who has generally been considered one of the most ill-natured of our wits, not only expressed his own approval of young Dodsley's performance, but recommended it to Rich, then manager of one of the Patent Theatres, procured it to be produced upon the stage, and lent his powerful aid to secure the author a good benefit, the mode by which dramatists at that time, were remunerated for their writings. Nor did Pope then desert his protegé; but continued to afford him his countenance and advice, till, having brought out a second piece, 'The King and the Miller of Mansfield,' the author was enabled with the profits to commence business as a bookseller —the profession which of all others, as being connected with literature, and placing him in constant intercourse with men of learning and talent, was most congenial to Dodsley's taste and wishes. There is no doubt that the friendship and counsel of his patron materially contributed to his success as a publisher; and eventually placed him at the head of his profession in England. Besides the excellent collection of ancient and modern Fables, edited and published by Mr. Dodsley, he was the author of several poems, dramatic pieces, and prose works, all of a strictly moral tendency, and distinguished for extensive knowledge and close observation of mankind. One of his works, which has been universally admired and translated into almost all the languages of Europe, is the well known 'Economy of Human Life.' He died on the 25th of September, 1764.

The Fables of Dodsley's collection, first published in the same year that their editor died, are chiefly translations, the language of which is greatly superior to any that had preceded them, from Æsop, Phædrus, La Fontaine and Fenelon The work, however, comprises many excellent originals of his own composition, the chief feature of which is elegant simplicity of diction, gentleness of reproof, and fertility of imagination.

Besides the Fabulists we have enumerated, the Spanish Poet Yriarte, the French Florian, De la Motte, and Nivernois, the German Gellert and Lessing, and the English Addison, Moore and Cowper, to whom might be added a long list of translators and imitators, deserve honourable mention. Numerous specimens of the style of each will be found embodied in this collection, from which the reader will be enabled to deduce a comparison of their several peculiarities, with less labour and greater satisfaction than from the most elaborate analysis. We must be permitted, however, to indulge in a few words concerning the delightful Fables of Lessing, who may be not inappropriately termed the Milton of Fabulists, seeking, as he does, his illustrations of life and morality from the highest sources, with a stretch of imagination and a compressed power of thought and language, which give dignity and grace to all that he utters. The majesty and daring of an extraordinary, yet perfectly subdued, mind and understanding, are visible in every sentence he has written. It is not the grandeur and beauty of words, but something beneath the surface which makes us ponder over his laconic and often quaint conceptions, from which we never turn dissatisfied away. He has all the depth, without the mysticism, of the metaphysical philosophers; and his strength is that

of the sweetest and simplest kind of olden poetry, in which mind and passion were blended, to form strains, which our hearts tell us will live as long as humanity.

On the nature and objects of Fable generally, a few words will suffice. They were originally intended, and have always been used to enforce the precepts of virtue and morality, not merely upon children, to whose perusal some persons at the present time would limit them, but upon mankind at large. Mr. Addison in the Spectator has made some observations on the subject that bear directly upon this point. "Fables," he says, "were the first pieces of wit that made their appearance in the world, and have been still highly valued, not only in times of the greatest simplicity, but in the most polite ages In the very beginning of the Commonwealth of Rome, we see a mutiny among the common people appeased by the Fable of 'The Belly and Limbs,' which was indeed very proper to gain the attention of an incensed rabble at a time when, perhaps, they would have torn to pieces any man who had preached the same doctrine to them in an open and direct manner. As Fables had their birth in the very infancy of learning, they never flourished more than when learning was at it greatest height." We are at all times too apt, in the assumed self-sufficiency of our mature wisdom, to quarrel with what we learned when children, from a fear of being ridiculed concerning some supposed predeliction for nursery knowledge. This is assuredly unworthy of our sober reason; and arises from our neglecting to test our own feelings and thoughts by the remembrances which dwell within us of the years of our childhood, on which the greater number of us have not only formed our prejudices and likings, but from which we have derived even the bases of our boasted philosophy. It may be doubted whether, in reality, we ever acquire a distaste for the simple stories, jests and maxims, which delighted us in the dawn of our career. We may, from artificial habit, reject, but we cannot despise the tales and songs of our childhood; and it may be remarked that, with regard to new books or the works of our best authors, those are invariably the most popular with all classes, which afford most gratification to the young.

With Fables it is more especially true, that what has pleased the child will lose none of its attractions for the man. There is, in this species of entertainment, more than a mere flight of imagination to impress the memory. We learn something of human nature, and are let into the secrets of our own minds in a manner that is rather calculated to please than offend. We see nothing of the satirist, who probes only to heal us; and who does not exhibit any of the personal spleen and ill-humour, which meet and put us out of countenance with ourselves and each other in the invectives of those who sometimes set up for moralists without the essential qualification of good-nature. The Fable gives an agreeable hint of the duties and relations of life, not an harangue on our want of sense or decorum. We feel none of the superiority of the Fabulist, who indeed generally leaves us to make the application of his instructive story in our own way; and if we do sometimes prefer to apply it to our neighbour's case instead of our own, we are still informed and amended, inasmuch as we have learned to despise some vice or folly which our unassisted judgment might have regarded more leniently.

The ancients divided Fables into three classess, Rational, Emblematical, and Mixed; for each of which they named a presiding genius, in the same way as Music and the Arts had each a separate guardian spirit to attend and direct their votaries.

Rational Fables are those in which the incidents occur in their natural order, and men are the only speakers. This is the most comprehensive class of apologues, and perhaps the most popular. "The Old Man and his Ass," "The Acorn and the Gourd," "The Countryman and the Snake," and "The Shepherd's Boy," are beautiful examples of this kind. Emblematical Fables are those in which beasts and birds, or even trees and inanimate substances, are

introduced as speakers and actors. This class differs from the former, inasmuch as it narrates circumstances which cannot occur in the course of nature, and gives the power and attributes of man to all things necessary for the attainment of the object sought. This has been considered by some writers as the earliest form in which the apologue was composed, as "nothing could be more obvious to persons conversant with animals, as the ancient shepherds and hunters were, than to suppose beasts to express their impressions to one another under certain circumstances. To extend the same power to vegetables was not nearly so obvious an idea, and most probably resulted from a desire to enlarge the limits of this kind of Fable." The Fables of this kind, which pass under the name of Æsop, are generally considered the most excellent for their simplicity and nature. Those, however, of La Fontaine and Lessing are greatly esteemed; and the few which our own Cowper has left, are unsurpassed for delicacy and propriety. We may instance among the numerous examples which occur of this description of apologue, "The Fox and the Raven," "The Spider and the Silkworm," "The Iron Pot and the Earthen Pot," "The Sensitive Plant and the Palm-tree," "The Diamond and the Glow-worm," and the capital one of "The Bitch and her Friend," which is said to have been originally delivered by one of the petty kings of ancient Gaul, with a view to dissuade some of the princes, his neighbours, from permitting certain foreigners, who had recently come among them, from settling and building a city in their dominions.

The last class, which is called Mixed Fables, is that in which men, animals and vegetables are introduced conversing together, combining the features of the rational and emblematical in one story. Modern Fabulists will be found to have taken a much greater license in this kind of incongruous union than the ancients, on the ground, perhaps, that the probabilities of the narrative were little regarded, provided the circumstances were illustrative and apt, without being strained too much against the notions which we have been in the habit of connecting with the things spoken of. Thus "Æsop and the Ass," and "The Forester and the Lion," offend us not, because the characters of the speakers are strictly preserved, and in accordance with our conception of what would be the conduct and language of each under the circumstances imagined for them.

The moral or object of a Fable should be borne in mind throughout its whole composition, and be evolved from the incidents of the story without any necessity for a separate explanation or application. The Fables of Æsop are, generally speaking, exceedingly happy for the simple and intelligible moral they convey. "The Cock and the Fox," "The Vain Jackdaw," "The Court and Country Mice," "The Lark and her Young ones," "Hercules and the Carter," with numerous others, have their moral so interwoven with their texture, that nobody can well mistake their aim. "The Mountain in Labour" has been cited as another instance of perspicuity, in ridicule of pompous pretensions, and "The Fox and the Raven" contains in itself the strongest practical injunction against the power of flattery.

The Commentators who have been pleased to take Fables under their patronage, have in this, as in a great portion of their other labours, contrived to find some obscurity in what nobody but themselves would have discovered a speck. Thus "The Cock and the Jewel" has been considered by them "so dark and ambiguous" that some have imputed the bird's rejection of the diamond to his wisdom, and others to his ignorance; while, in all probability, less learned persons would have discovered the philosophy of the barn-yard sultan to have been of pretty much the same complexion with that of the benighted fop in a thunder-storm; who offered his embroidered coat and lace ruffles, for a water-proof gaberdine of the coarsest texture.

Mr. Dodsley, who is not generally a captious, and never an ill-natured critic, quarrels with the Fable of "The Fox and the Grapes," because he conceives the author to have been guilty of an unnecessary incongruity in making an animal covet what it has really no relish for. This would certainly be highly objectionable in a modern Fable; but "The Fox and the Grapes" has been thoroughly naturalized and become too proverbial, for us to endure it in a new or altered form. The same kind of objection is taken against "The Lion and other beasts hunting," because the goat is made one of the beasts of prey; and the notion of the lion falling in love with the forester's daughter, excites the critic's severe reprehension. Indeed Mr. Dodsley has rated the old moralists for their absurdities in a style which would not disgrace the modern reviewers. "The rule," he says, "that a Fable should be natural, may be violated several ways; when we make creatures enter into unnatural associations, or ascribe to them appetites and passions that are inconsistent with their known characters; or otherwise employ them in such occupations as are foreign and unsuitable to their respective natures. A hedge-hog should not be said to drive away flies; nor a partridge offer his service to delve in a vineyard. A ponderous iron and an earthen vase should not swim together down a river: and he that should make his goose lay golden eggs would shew a luxuriant fancy, but very little judgment. In short, nothing beside the faculty of speech and reason, which Fable has been allowed to confer even upon inanimates, must ever contradict the nature of things, or at least the commonly received opinions concerning them."

The same author has recorded his opinion of the materials to the use of which in the composition of Fable he thinks there can be no objection. "The mandrake," he says, "may be made to utter groans, and the dying swan to pour forth her elegy. The sphynx and the phœnix, the syren and the centaur, have all the existence that is requisite for Fable. Nay the goblin, the fairy, and even the man in the moon, may have each his province allotted him, provided it be not an improper one. Here the notoriety of opinion supplies the place of fact, and in this manner truth may be fairly deduced from falsehood." In another place it is said that the Fabulist "may press into his service every kind of existence under Heaven; not only beasts, birds, insects, and all the animal creation, but flowers, shrubs, trees, and all the tribe of vegetables. Even mountains, fossils, and minerals, discourse articulately at his command, and act the part which he assigns to them. The vine may be enamoured of the elm; the swelling mountain may be delivered of a mouse. The gourd may reproach the pine, the sky-rocket insult the stars, the axe solicit a new handle of the forest, and the moon, in her feminine character, request a fashionable petticoat." It may be added that the wide range here conceded to the Fabulist has seldom been overstepped by judicious authors, and where it has been so, and the Fable has outlived its century, we may be assured that there is something within it to which the cold rules of criticism ought to succumb, rather than the erratic composition be rejected.

Before concluding these remarks, we may be permitted to offer a word or two concerning the relative merits of the translations of Æsop, which have been used for this collection. Of the version of Leonard Willan, first published in 1650, under the title of "The Phrygian Fabulist," as but one or two extracts have been made from his quaint volume, little need be said, except that it has much of the pith and gravity which distinguish most of the writings of the same period, with somewhat more of simplicity than was common in that exceedingly learned and controversial age. Willan's, which was not the first translation, is now a scarce book, and from its style and phraseology would not be likely to become popular. Between the publication of this, and Sir Roger L'Estrange's version, which for many years was the popular collection; several other translations, of various merit,

appeared, among which, that of John Ogilby, the translator of Homer and Virgil in verse, is pre-eminently distinguished for its spirit, power, and general fidelity. Sir Roger L'Estrange's book has been more frequently viewed in reference to the personal history and opinions of the writer, than upon its merits. Dr. Croxall, whose version partly superseded Sir Roger's, speaks of his predecessor with a degree of sectarian hate, which, in the present day, would seem unintelligible if we had not the remembrance of the era of Catholic disqualification and thraldom to enlighten us. L'Estrange was a Catholic, who, during the Commonwealth, had been a partisan of the Stuarts, and actively employed in raising forces and conducting intrigues to bring about the restoration of Charles II.; services for which he afterwards experienced the favour of that king, and of his brother, James II. This in itself was enough to incur the enmity of a staunch admirer of the Revolution of 1688, and Dr. Croxall accordingly carried his animosity against the author into a criticism of his book, with as little charity, and perhaps also as little truth, as an orangeman of the present day would consider necessary to be exercised, in reviewing the lucubrations of a known Jesuit.

L'Estrange, in the preface to his Fables, had stated that his intention in the translation was to instruct and benefit children, "who, being as it were mere blank paper, are ready indifferently for any opinion, good or bad, taking all upon credit." The Doctor has observed upon this, "What poor devils would L'Estrange make of those children who should be so unfortunate as to read his book and imbibe his pernicious principles!—principles coined and suited to promote the growth, and serve the ends, of Popery and arbitrary power. Though we had never been told he was pensioner to a Popish prince, and that he himself professed the same religion, yet his reflections upon Æsop would discover it to us. In every political touch he discovers himself to be the tool and hireling of a Popish faction; since even a slave, without some mercenary view, would not bring arguments to justify slavery, nor endeavour to establish arbitrary power upon the basis of right reason. What sort of children, therefore, are the 'blank paper' upon which such morality as this ought to be written? Not the children of Britain, I hope; for they are born with free blood in their veins, and suck in liberty with their very milk. This they should be taught to love and cherish above all things, and upon occasion to defend and vindicate it as the glory of their country, the greatest blessing of their lives, and the peculiarly happy privilege in which they excel all the world besides. Let therefore the children of Italy, France, Spain, and the rest of the Popish countries furnish him with 'blank paper,' for principles of which free-born Britons are not capable. The earlier such notions are instilled in such minds as theirs, indeed, the better it will be for them, as it will keep them from thinking of any other than the abject, servile condition to which they were born. But let the minds of our British youth be for ever educated and improved in that spirit of truth and liberty, for the support of which their ancestors have often bravely exhausted so much blood and treasure."

The reader will not fail to perceive that, in these strictures, there is at least as much conceit, selfishness and bigotry, as could well exist in the author against whom they are directed: while there is infinitely less of toleration and kindly feeling. The worst motives are imputed without scruple to the writer attacked. "The pernicious principles of the mercenary tool and hireling of a Popish faction," are not even cited in support of the charge on which he is arraigned: but while the children of Britain are tenderly cautioned to eschew the notions of the old Royalist and papist, the children of "Italy, France, Spain, and the rest of the Popish countries," are considered fit recipients for the same "pernicious principles;" which it is even asserted they will be the better for imbibing early,

as it will tend to keep them in the same "abject, servile condition *to which they were born.*" A lover of rational liberty, with no factious ends to serve, and with nothing at heart but the welfare of his country and his kind, would have advocated a very different doctrine, and not have sought to make "Liberty" and "Slavery" the watchwords of any religious sect. It is singular too, that one professing so much veneration for freedom should conceive the boundaries of Great Britain to be the proper limits of its native growth, and Protestants the only set of persons who can appreciate, or are fit for its enjoyment.

We should certainly be as clearly justified in speaking harshly of these "pernicious principles" of the Doctor, as he was in condemning L'Estrange. But there is a broader principle or test, by which the sentiments of men may be examined, and which will generally lead us to a conclusion not very remote from the truth:—namely, that of the age and country in which an author wrote, and the political circumstances by which he was surrounded. When Sir Roger L'Estrange in his "Reflection" upon the Fable of "The Wolf and the Dog," informs us that the love of freedom meant to be inculcated therein is to be understood of the mind; before we cavil with him upon the strength of our own conviction that Æsop had also another kind of freedom in view, we must remember that the age of Charles II. and his less fortunate successor, was one in which the *divine right* of kings was recognized by many of the profoundest philosophers in England; and that the press was at the same time under a strict censorship—so strict indeed, that some of the writings of the immortal Milton were not permitted to see the light, because they contained opinions and arguments which the ruling powers considered dangerous to their authority. The fact, therefore, appears to be that, whether Popish pensioner or not, L'Estrange was the advocate of peace, order, morality and religion, and that he was not desirous, supposing he had been permitted, to embroil the consideration of these things, especially in the minds of children, with abstract notions of political freedom, which would have rendered his work a mere party book, and limited its usefulness to the readers of a clique.

In endeavouring to rescue this author, however, from what we have considered injustice to his memory, we must not pass over what we conceive to have been his faults. He himself observed in his preface that the translations existing at the time his work was published, were "so insipid and flat in their moral, and so coarse and uncouth in the style and diction, that they were rather dangerous than profitable, as to the purpose for which they were principally intended, and likely to do forty times more harm than good." When he, therefore, occasionally descended to ribaldry, coarseness, and indelicacy, he did so with a perfect knowledge that he was offending against propriety, and doing what was calculated to injure the generation for whose benefit he professed to labour. We can readily excuse some of the phrases which he was in the habit of using, and which Mr. Dodsley, whose criticism savours somewhat too much of powder and lace for our plain notions, condemned as ungenteel, vulgar, and low. For example, we see no absolute offence, though there is nothing to admire, in the sentence, "While the frog and the mouse were disputing it at the sword's point, down comes a kite, powdering them in the interim, and gobbets up both together to part the fray." But we cannot extend our indulgence to the page in which the fox is made to reproach "a bevy of jolly, gossiping wenches, making merry over a dish of pullets, that if he had but peeped into a hen-roost, they always made a bawling with their dogs and their bastards, 'while you yourselves,' continues Renard, 'can lie stuffing your guts with your hens and your capons, and not a word of the pudding.'" This is really vulgar, as well as flippant, and at the same time does no credit to the author's wit, or to his command of expression and ideas.

The Fables selected from L'Estrange for the present collection, are such as contain no allusion or expression that could offend the most fastidious.

In Dr. Croxall's version, there is nothing in the language or thoughts that could by any perversion be construed to be objectionable; but at the same time there is considerable dullness in many of his long and laboured "Applications," and not unfrequently a great degree of obscurity, arising from an apparent apprehension that the simplest matters may be mistaken or not understood without explanation. An example of the Doctor's singular mode of rendering intelligible that which he fancied abstruse, occurs in his remarks on the Fable of "The Creaking Wheel." "Though we naturally desire," he says, "to give vent to the fullness of our heart, when it is charged with grief, and though by uttering our complaints we may happen to move the compassion of those that hear us; yet, everything considered, it is best to repress and keep them to ourselves; or, if we must let our sorrows speak, to take care that it is done in solitude and retirement. What the poets mention as an usual thing with lovers, would not be amiss in those who are under any froward calamity, which cannot be kept quiet, to utter it to the woods and mountains, and to call the rocks and rivers to witness the cruelty of their destiny. That is, if they must shew any weakness or impatience under the pressure of adverse fortune, to do it as privately as they can. For though the commiseration of a soft-hearted person may be drawn forth sometimes, by imparting the bitterness of our condition, yet the world will be apt to think us troublesome and importunate, and to conclude that if our hardships were so great as we would have people believe, we could not bear to think of them so frequently and abundantly as sometimes we do. But, besides, nothing is more generally true, than that it is much happier for us to share the envy than the pity of mankind. And if the first of these is by no means eligible, if we could avoid it, how much more ought we to take care to give as little occasion as possible for the latter? Scarce any one is envied without possessing something valuable, or at least desirable; but we no sooner become objects of pity, than we are found out to be deficient in some respect or other, and perhaps unfit and unequal for the company and acquaintance with which we formerly conversed. Upon the whole, though we be pitied, we shall never be the more esteemed for being miserable; and if we can but appear happy, ten to one but we shall be beloved in course."

The Fable to which this long moral is appended, will be found at p. 44 of this volume: and in our opinion the one has no kind of relevancy to the other. The Fable evidently contains its own moral; and was intended merely as a rebuke to those who are surprised at consequences which naturally flow from a person's situation or circumstances. It was as natural for "the worst wheel of the whole set" to "take the liberty" of creaking, as for "persons labouring under any affliction or infirmity to complain." The satire is levelled at the coachman, who was more surprised at this, than if one of the sound wheels had been guilty of the same impertinence. It *might* have occurred to the Doctor that this same Fable had a political aim; and was designed as a reproof to that class of statesmen who receive with due respect and attention the petitions and suggestions of men whose grievances are too slight to need much redress, while they spurn at the representations of their humbler, and more oppressed brethren, as too much beneath their dignified notice, and as emanating from "the worst wheels of the whole set, which they think have little pretence to take such a liberty." This application seems to us so obvious that we cannot at all understand how it escaped the learned translator, who has taken occasion to plume himself on being "a lover of liberty and truth, and an enemy to tyranny, both of church and state."

Notwithstanding a few defects, however, Dr. Croxall's work is one which will long continue to be read with delight and instruction; not only for the number and

excellence of the Fables it contains; but for the applications attached to them, which form, indeed, nearly half the bulk of his volume.

The materials proper to be used for the purposes of Fable have been already spoken of. We will conclude with a few words on their general composition. The object of the author is to convey some moral truth to the reader or auditor, without usurping the province of the professed lecturer or pedant. The lesson must therefore be conveyed in an agreeable form; so that the moralist himself may be as little prominent as possible. The Fable has therefore almost invariably assumed the dramatic form, in which men, animals, birds, insects and other natural objects almost invariably form the *dramatis personæ*. After having considered the story by which the intended moral is designed to be illustrated, it is necessary to cast the characters in such a manner that they may not offend our notions of propriety. Thus, while we assign to certain animals or things their known or reputed attributes and qualities, as strength and magnanimity to the lion, obstinacy to the mule, cunning to the fox, mimicry to the monkey, awkwardness to the bear, and stupidity to the ass, we must be careful to make their language conformable to their nature, and to see that they behave and argue as it may be supposed such animals would, if endowed with the human faculties of speech and reason. The Fables ascribed to Æsop are perhaps the best examples we have of strict preservation of character in all the actors. The dogs of that author are downright dogs, with infinite sagacity, courage, general kindliness and good humour, and a strong attachment to man. His wolves are irreclaimable brigands, seizing every pretext for plunder, or making such pretexts where none could be found. His foxes are swift, artful, petty marauders, driven to every kind of shift and double; but never at a loss for a plea or a subterfuge. The *Horses* of Swift's Gulliver's Travels, the *Hind and the Panther* of Dryden, and sometimes the animals of Fenelon, are, on the contrary, brutes in nothing but form: their manners and dialogue are those of men with the full faculties, prepossessions and prejudices of humanity.

The language of Fable cannot be too simple and familiar. It should be that of easy and elegant insinuation, without any admixture of argument or pretension. It is the graceful and light-hearted familiarity of La Fontaine, added to the delicious humour which he has blended with his narratives and reflections, that have made his Fables more popular than those of any other writer. His wit does not appear to be premeditated but arises naturally out of, and seems proper to the treatment of his subject, unstrained and gentle, not felt as an ornament or extraneous introduction but seeming inherent to the composition in which it occurs. Tedious reflections, frequent allusions, lengthened descriptions, or even an excess of imagery or metaphor are always injurious to Fable, as destroying the unity of the design, and the connection of the several parts, with the moral which it is intended to convey. It is to this elaboration of detail that we owe so much obscurity in some of our long poetical Fables. The parts are treated by the authors without reference to the general effect of the whole. In Æsop, Phædrus, La Fontaine Dodsley and Cowper, there is almost an entire absence of illustration, except such as has before been mentioned to be essential to the story itself.

Of the moral little need be said. No one it may be fairly presumed would think of inculcating by Fable the necessity of vicious pursuits, or the benefits of evil inclinations. Injustice, oppression, fraud, improvidence, idleness and crime have never yet found public advocates, however they may have been privately practised. Men who have propensities to these things endeavour to conceal even from themselves the nature of their disposition; and most frequently give some other name than the true one to the failing they possess. It is the province of Fable to unmask this kind of self-deceit and duplicity; to inform us without arousing our passions into opposition, that the unction which we are willing to lay

to our souls, has no healing power below the surface; and at the same time to shew us that our friends or acquaintance are not always so good or so bad as external appearances would represent them.

By *moral*, however, we must not be understood to mean those little explanatory applications which Fabulists sometimes put at the beginning or end of their compositions. These were not used by the ancients, who made the precepts they wished to teach in their Fables, spring from the Fables themselves. The separate moral is a modern invention. Phædrus, indeed, usually began his apologues with some reflection appropriate to the subject on which he intended to treat; but it was reserved for more recent writers to give in a distinct sentence the maxim they sought to inculcate. Gay and Dodsley were in the habit of placing theirs at the beginning of their Fables, La Motte Fenelon and Cowper inserted them at the end, and La Fontaine put them at the beginning and end indifferently. Mr. Dodsley assigns as a reason for preferring the beginning, that he would not pay his readers or himself so bad a compliment as to suppose that after the Fable had been read, the meaning could not be discovered. "When the moral of a Fable," he adds, "is not very prominent and striking, a leading thought at the beginning puts the reader in a proper track. He knows the game which he pursues; and, like a beagle on a warm scent, he follows the sport with alacrity in proportion to his intelligence. On the other hand, if he have no previous intimation of the design, he is puzzled throughout the Fable, and cannot determine upon its merits, without the trouble of a fresh perusal. A ray of light, imparted at first, may shew him the tendency and propriety of every expression as he goes along; but while he travels in the dark, no wonder if he stumble or mistake his way."

We should be of precisely the same opinion as Mr. Dodsley, and should have adopted his rule, if we had not been aware that readers, more especially young ones, are prone to *skip* the moral till they have read the Fable, and occasionally to forget to revert to it; and that, therefore, when the precept is placed at the beginning, there is great probability that it will not be read at all. Not to set ourselves in opposition, however, to any of the great authorities on either side of the question, the moral has been printed in this collection, at whichever end of the apologue it happened to be placed in the work from which it was extracted or translated.

It only remains for us to speak of the present compilation. The Fables adopted from previous collections, have been carefully revised, with reference to their style and matter; because, being designed chiefly for the young, it was desirable that nothing objectionable should find admission, and that no false taste in composition should be generated in the reader by a perusal of the work. With Dr. Croxall's translations much liberty of verbal alteration has been taken; many of his applications have been materially abridged, and a great number altogether omitted. Mr. Dodsley's work seemed to require, and therefore has received less correction. Those derived from other sources have been treated according to what appeared to be their respective merits.

The excellent poetical versions of La Fontaine's Fables, are chiefly derived from a volume published anonymously by Mr. Murray, in 1820, and are believed to be the production of Mr. Matthews. Those from Nivernois were published by Mr. Cadell, in 1799. Yriarte's, with the exception of "The Paroquet and the Dove," and a few others, are by Mr. John Belfour. The whole of the translations from Lessing and Gellert, and most of the prose versions from La Fontaine, Fenelon and Florian, are original. Some new Fables will be found interspersed in the collection, to which, in most instances, the names of the authors have been appended in the Index.

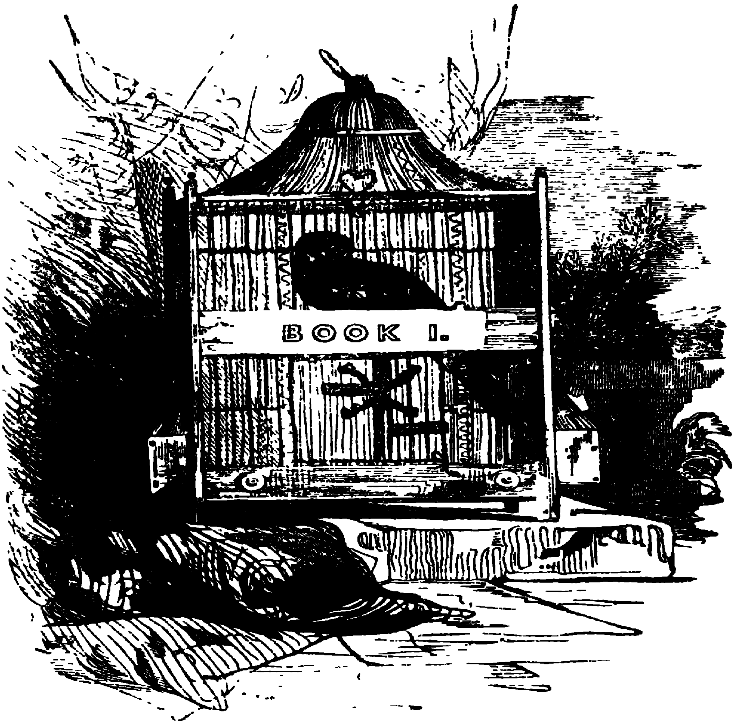
Of the designs and engravings with which this work is illustrated, we feel more at liberty to speak, and cannot speak too highly. M. Grandville has caught the true inspiration of the Fabulists, and has wrought in that spirit of love for his subject, which seldom fails to attain its object. His pictures are no cold or literal transcripts from the narratives which suggested them; but faithful representations of realities; which, notwithstanding the occasionally grotesque personages who figure as the principal actors, we feel to have been drawn from the life. The costume, the scenery, the attendant circumstances, in each instance, are such as heighten the interest, and expand the moral application of the story to which they have reference. Take "The Fox and the Grapes," p. 92, as an example. The acidity of the grapes is manifest at a glance. The oaken staff of the mastiff under such circumstances, would have deprived honey of its sweetness. It is not merely the fruit upon the wall, which is out of the reach of Renard, in his proper character; but the domestic hens of the country squire, as they go to the village church, are too strictly and vigilantly guarded to afford Messrs. Fox an opportunity to deliver even a loving billet in their character of seducing gallants. We know of nothing superior to this, in unexaggerated satirical drawing, except the truth-telling pictures of our inimitable Hogarth.

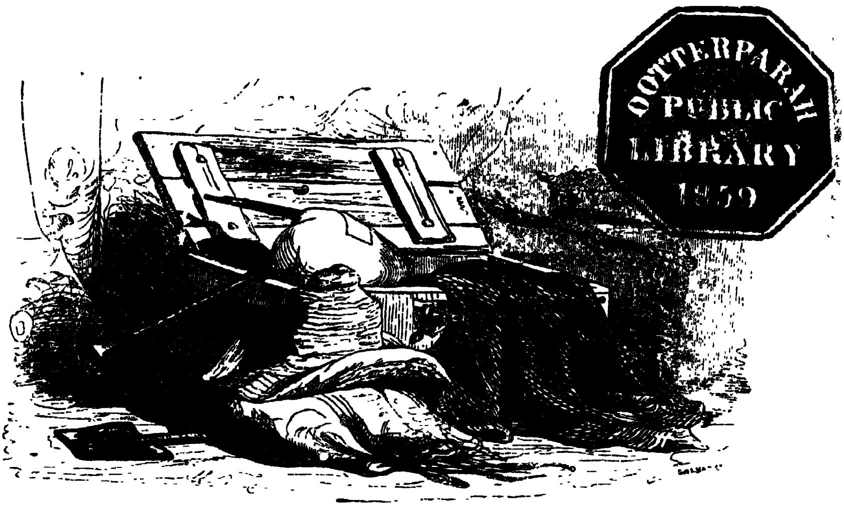
The principal object in compiling this volume has been to produce a good selection of the most approved Fables, from all the known sources extant. Should the work be found to be an improvement upon former collections, and of service to the young for instruction, or to those of more advanced years for harmless amusement, in recalling early impressions and remembrances, the end of the projectors will have been fully attained.



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FABLES.

BOOK I.

THE COCK AND THE FOX.



JUST as a cock had perched himself upon a corn-rick, and began to crow, a fox, who had lain concealed in the neighbouring thicket, watching for an opportunity of plunder, came up, and finding his contemplated victim inaccessible from the height of his situation, had recourse to stratagem, in order to decoy him down; so, approaching the rick: "Cousin," said he, "I am heartily glad to see you; but at the same time I cannot forbear expressing my uneasiness at the inconvenience of the place, which will not let me pay my respects to you in a handsome manner: though I suppose you will come down presently, when that difficulty will be easily removed"—"Indeed, cousin," said the cock, "to tell you the truth, I do not think it safe to venture upon the ground; for though I am convinced how much you are my friend, yet I may have the misfortune to fall into the clutches of some other beast, and what will become of me then?"—"O dear," said Renard, "is it possible that you can be so ignorant as not to know of the peace that has been lately proclaimed between all kinds of birds and beasts, and that we are for the future to forbear hostilities on all sides, and to live in the utmost love and harmony, and that under penalty of suffering the severest punishment that can be inflicted?" All this while the cock seemed to give little attention to what he

said, but stretched out his neck, as if he saw something at a distance. "Cousin," said the fox, "what is that you look at so earnestly?"—"Why," replied the cock, "I think I see a pack of hounds yonder, a little way off."—"O then," returned the fox, "your humble servant, I must begone."—"Nay, pray, cousin, do not go," said the cock, "I am just coming down: sure you are not afraid of dogs in these peaceable times!"—"No, no," said he, "but ten to one whether they have heard of the proclamation yet."

THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERD.

A SHEPHERD lost the whole of his flock by a dreadful contagion. The wolf, hearing of it, came to condole with him.

"Shepherd," said he, "is it true that thou hast met with so severe a misfortune, and art deprived of thy whole flock? So amiable, pious a flock! I feel for thee, and could shed tears of blood."

"Many thanks, master Wolf;" said the shepherd. "I see thou hast a heart brimful of compassion."

"Indeed, he has," added the shepherd's dog, "whenever he suffers in person by his neighbour's misfortune."

CÆSAR AND THE SLAVE.

TIBERIUS CÆSAR, being once upon a progress to Naples, put in at a house he had upon mount Misenus, which was built there by Lucullus, and commanded a near view of the Adriatic sea, and a distant prospect even of the Mediterranean. Here, as he was walking in the gardens and shrubberies, one of his domestic slaves who belonged to that house, putting himself on the alert, appeared in one of the walks where the Emperor happened to be, sprinkling the ground with a watering-pot, in order to lay the dust; and this he did so officiously, that he was taken notice of, and even laughed at, for he ran through the private alleys and turnings, from one walk to another; so that, wherever the emperor went, he still found this fellow, mighty busy with his watering-pot. But at last his design being discovered, which was, that he fancied Cæsar would be so touched with this diligence of his, as to make him free (part of which consisted in giving the intended freeman a gentle stroke on one side of his face), his imperial majesty, being disposed to be merry, called the slave to him: and when the man came up full of joyful expectations of his liberty:—"Hark you, friend," said he, "I have observed that you have been very busy, in officiously meddling where you had nothing to do, while you might have employed your time better elsewhere; and therefore I must be so free as to tell you that you have mistaken your man: I cannot afford a box on the ear at so low a price as you bid for it."

Phædrus, the author of this Fable, tells us that it is a true story; and that he wrote it for the sake of a set of industrious idle gentlemen at Rome, who were harassed and fatigued with a daily succession of care and trouble, because they had nothing to do; always in a hurry, but without business; busy to no purpose; labouring under a voluntary necessity, and taking abundance of pains to shew they were good for nothing.

THE YOUNG MAN AND THE SWALLOW.

A PRODIGAL young spendthrift, who had wasted his whole patrimony in taverns and gaming-houses, among, lewd, idle company, was taking a melancholy walk near a brook. It was in the month of January, and happened to be one of those warm, sunshiny days, which sometimes smile upon us even in that wintry season of the year; and, to make it the more flattering, a swallow, which by mistake had made its appearance too soon, flew skimming along upon the surface of the water. The giddy youth observing this, without any further consideration concluded that summer was come, and that he should therefore have little occasion for clothes, so went and pawned them at the broker's, and ventured the money for one stake more among his sharping companions. When this, like the rest, was gone, he took another solitary walk in the same place as before. But the weather, being severe and frosty, had given everything an aspect very different from what it had before; the brook was quite frozen over, and the poor swallow lay dead upon the bank; the very sight of which cooled the young spark's brains, till, coming to a sense of his misery, he reproached the deceased bird as the author of all his misfortunes:—"Ah! wretch that thou wert;" said he, "thou hast undone both thyself and me, who was so credulous as to depend upon thee."

That "One swallow does not make a summer," is perhaps upon the whole the best rendering of this Fable which could be given: it contains, however, a more extended morality, and teaches us to retain at least sufficient forethought for self-preservation, and not to allow our conduct to be regulated by the accidental circumstances of the moment. Sir Roger L'Estrange, in his metrical translation of the Fables of Æsop, appends the following *Moral* to the version given of the "Young man and the swallow."

"Uncommon causes should not be
Made rules in our economy;
Nor an irregular accident
Be drawn into a precedent.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE PEACOCK.

A SOCIABLE nightingale found amongst the songsters of the grove, plenty who envied her, but no friend. "Perhaps," thought she, "I may find one in another species," and flew confidingly to the peacock.

"Beautiful peacock! I admire thee."—"And I thee, lovely nightingale!"—"Then let us be friends," continued the nightingale; "we shall not be envious of each other; thou art as pleasing to the eye as I to the ear." The nightingale and the peacock became friends.

THE YOUNG MAN AND THE LION.

AN old man who was lord of a great estate, and had only one child, a son, of whom he was exceedingly fond, was remarkably weak and superstitious regarding the influence of dreams, omens, and prognostics. The young man, his son, was

addicted to hunting, and usually rose with the first streak of morning to follow the chase.

One night the father dreamed that his son was killed by a lion, and the circumstance made so deep an impression upon him, that he would not suffer the young man to go into the forest any more. He built a castle for his reception, in which he kept him closely confined, lest he should steal out privately to hunt, and meet his fate. Yet, as this was purely the effect of his love and fondness for him, he studied to make his confinement as agreeable as possible: and, in order to do so, furnished the castle with a variety of pictures, in which were all kinds of wild beasts, such as his son used to hunt, and among the rest, the portrait of a lion. This the young man viewed one day more attentively than ordinary; and being vexed in his mind at the unreasonable confinement which his father's dream had occasioned him, he broke out into a violent passion, and looking sternly at the lion: "Cruel savage," said he, "it is to thy grim and terrible form that I owe my imprisonment; if I had a sword in my hand, and thou wert living and before me, I would run it through thy heart, thus—" Saying this he struck his fist at the lion's breast, and unfortunately tore his hand with the point of a nail which stuck in the wainscot, and was hidden under the canvass. The wound festered, and turned to a gangrene; this threw the young man into a fever, of which he died; so that the father's dream was fulfilled by the very caution he took to prevent it.

A counterpart of the story of this Fable will be found in the "History of the third Royal Calender," in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*; where a rich jeweller conceals his son in a subterraneous cavern of a desert island, to avert the consequences of an astrological prediction which had doomed him at a certain age, to die by the hands of King Agib: an event which is brought to pass by an accident, occasioned by the very precautions used to prevent it. To account for the similarity, it will perhaps be sufficient to allude to the fact, that, at a very early period, the Arabic writers were well acquainted with the works of the Greek and Latin classics, which they translated into their own language, and thus disseminated through the Eastern world. There is sufficient evidence that Æsop and Phædrus were among the authors with whom they were familiar. Though, without adopting this solution, we might refer the matter to the universal prevalence, in ancient times, of a belief in the truth of astrology; and the stories put in circulation by the adepts in that art, in order to maintain their own credit, would naturally have partaken of much sameness, whether the practitioners of one country were acquainted with the resources of another or not.

Dr. Croxall has some sensible and judicious observations on this Fable. "Though it may seem," he says "to favour and encourage the notion of dreams and such fancied discoveries of future events, it is intended to ridicule and explode them. What can be more absurd than the practice of those credulous fools, who, having faith enough to believe the veracity of oracles, had the impudence or stupidity to try to defeat them afterwards? This was making a god with one hand, and throwing him away with the other. First they ask the Almighty what he intends to do? When he has told them, they believe and tremble, but are resolved to disappoint him if they can: nay, they think they can, and set about it accordingly. These low, inconsistent notions of God, gave the first birth to Atheism; and were they not too common in the world still, that pernicious principle, if there be any such principle in reality, would be either entirely rooted out, or grow so thin, as not to hinder the increase of virtue. When the Deity, which the generality of the world acknowledge, is used as if he were a Deity of irresolution, instability, mutability and passion, men of any discernment immediately renounce such a Deity as that, and, for want of due consideration, remain Atheists; it being, indeed, less absurd of the two, not to believe in a Supreme Being at all, than to believe that he is subject to the frailties of us wretched mortals, and governed by whim and fancy."



THE WOLF, THE FOX, AND THE APE.

THE WOLF, THE FOX, AND THE APE.

A WOLF one day demanded judgment against a neighbouring fox, for larceny. The cause was argued in the court of Mr. Justice Ape by the parties in person; and, as may be judged from their characters, though no lawyers were employed, the question was one of the most entangled and intricate that had ever been brought before the bench for decision.

When the litigants had exhausted both themselves and their arguments, the Judge, well acquainted with the knavery of each, pronounced sentence as follows: "My friends, I have known you both for some time; and, wishing to temper justice with mercy, shall inflict on each an equal penalty On you, Mr. Wolf, because you complain without having sustained any injury; and on you, Renard, as without doubt you have committed the theft you are accused of."

The ape dismissed the court with this profound remark, that "Whether right or wrong: there could be no injustice in punishing rogues."

THE FALCON AND THE HEN.

DIFFERENT circumstances make the same action right or wrong, a virtue or a vice.

"Of all the creatures I ever knew," said a falcon to a hen, "you are certainly the most ungrateful."—"What instance of ingratitude," replied the hen, "can you justly charge upon me?"—"The greatest," returned the falcon; "ingratitude to your highest benefactors, men. Do they not feed you every day, and shelter you every night? Nevertheless, when they endeavour to court you to them, you ungratefully forget all their kindness, and fly from them as from an enemy. Now I, who am wild by nature, and no way obliged to them; yet upon the least of their caresses, I suffer myself to be taken, and go or come at their command."—"All this is very true," replied the hen, "but there may be sufficient reason both for my fear and your familiarity: I believe you never saw a single falcon roasting at the fire; whereas, I have seen a hundred hens trussed for that purpose."

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE MONEY-BAG.

As two men were travelling on the road, one of them espied a bag of money lying on the ground, and picking it up, "I am in luck this morning," said he, "I have found a bag of money."—"Yes," returned the other; "though methinks, you should not say *I*, but *We* have found it: for when two friends are travelling together, they ought equally to share in any accidental good fortune that may happen to attend them."—"No," rejoined the former, "it was I that found it, and I must insist upon keeping it." He had no sooner spoken the words than they were alarmed with a hue and cry after a thief, who had that morning taken a purse upon the road. "Lord," says the finder, "this is extremely unfortunate, we shall certainly be seized."—"Good Sir," replied the other, "be pleased not to say *We*, but *I*: for as you would not allow me a share in the prize, you have no right to make me a partner in the punishment."

THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

An eagle, from the top of a high mountain, making a stoop at a lamb, pounced upon it, and bore it away to her young. A crow, who had built her nest in a cedar near the foot of a rock, observing what passed, was ambitious of performing the same exploit; and darting from her nest, fixed her talons in the fleece of another lamb. But, neither able to move her prey, nor to disentangle her feet, she was taken by the shepherd, and carried away for his children to play with; who eagerly enquiring what bird it was:—" An hour ago," said he, " she fancied herself an eagle; however, I suppose she is by this time convinced, that she is but a crow "

To mistake our own talents, or over-rate our abilities, is always ridiculous, and sometimes dangerous.

JUPITER AND THE HORSE.

" Father of man and beast," said the horse, approaching the throne or Jupiter, " it is said that I am one of the noblest of the creations with which you have adorned the world, and my vanity bids me believe it. But do you not think my form still capable of improvement? "

" And what dost thou suppose would improve thee? Speak; I am open to instruction: " said the gracious deity, smiling.

" Perhaps," continued the horse, " I should have more speed if my legs were longer and more slender; a long swan-like neck would add to my beauty; a broader chest would increase my strength; and, once for all, since you have destined me to carry your favourite, man, it might be as well if the saddle, which the benevolent horseman supplies me with, were a part of my being."

" Good," pursued Jupiter; " have patience a moment! " and, with a solemn air, the God spake the word of creation. The dust became animated, organized matter was combined; and suddenly stood before the throne, the frightful Camel.

The horse saw, shuddered, and trembled from excessive disgust.

" Here are longer and more slender legs," said Jove; " here is a long swan-like neck; a broader chest; a ready created saddle! Dost thou desire to be endowed with a similar form? "

The horse still trembled.

" Go," continued the deity, " and this time the admonition shall suffice without the addition of punishment. To remind thee occasionally, however, of thy audacity, this new creation shall continue to exist! "—Then, casting a sustaining glance upon the camel, Jove continued—" and the horse shall never perceive thee, without fear and trembling."

THE HORSE AND THE OX.

A brave lad flew proudly along on a high mettled courser: A wild ox called out to the horse: " Shame on thee! never would I be governed by a boy! "—" I would," said the horse; " for what honour should I acquire by throwing him off?"

THE LION AND THE HARE.

A LION once honoured a hare with his friendship. "Is it really a fact," demanded the hare, "that the crowing of a miserable cock is sufficient to compel you lions to take to flight?"

"Such is undoubtedly the case," replied the lion; "and it is a general remark, that we large animals are usually possessed by some trivial weakness. You must have heard for example, that the grunt of a pig causes astonishment and fright in the elephant."

"Indeed!" interrupted the hare. "Ha! now I can understand why we hares are so terribly afraid of the dogs."

THE TWO FOXES.

Two foxes formed a stratagem to enter a hen-roost: which, having successfully executed, and killed the cock, the hens and the chickens, they began to feed upon them with singular satisfaction. One of the foxes, who was young and inconsiderate, was for devouring them all upon the spot: the other, who was old and covetous, proposed to reserve some of them for another time. "For experience, child," said he, "has made me wise, and I have seen many unexpected events since I came into the world. Let us provide, therefore, against what may happen, and not consume all our store at one meal."—"All this is wondrous wise," replied the young fox; "but for my part, I am resolved not to stir till I have eaten as much as will serve me a whole week: for who would be mad enough to return hither, when it is certain the owner of these fowls will watch for us, and if he should catch, would certainly put us to death." After this short discourse, each pursued his own scheme: the young fox ate till he burst himself, and had scarcely strength to reach his hole before he died. The old one, who thought it much better to deny his appetite for the present and lay up provision for the future, returned the next day and was killed by the farmer.

Thus every age has its peculiar vice: the young suffer by their insatiable thirst after pleasure: and the old, by their incorrigible and inordinate avarice.

THE POET AND THE DEATH-WATCH.

As a Poet sate in his closet feasting his imagination with the hopes of fame and immortality, he was startled on a sudden with the ominous sound of a death-watch. However, immediately recollecting himself: "Vain insect," said he, "cease thy impertinent forebodings, sufficient indeed to frighten the weakness of women or of children, but far beneath the notice of a Poet and Philosopher. As for me, whatever accident may threaten my life; my fame, spite of thy prognostics, shall live to future ages."—"It may be so," replied the insect; "I find at least thou had'st rather listen to the maggot in thy head, than to the worm beneath thy table: but know, that the suggestions of vanity are altogether as deceitful as those of superstition."

THE ONLY WISE MAN.

Æsop was commanded by his master, who designed to entertain the philosophers and orators, to stand at the gate and admit none but wise men. At the appointed time several came to the gate, requesting admittance. Æsop put this question to them all—"What stirs the dog?" At which they were much offended, supposing he meant to give them that appellation. At last one came who made this reply to his question—"His ears and his tail." Æsop satisfied with the answer, admitted him, and conducted him to his master, saying there was only one philosopher who had desired admittance. The day following, when they met at the schools, they reproached Xanthus with treating them contemptuously, by permitting his servant to stand at the gate and salute them with the opprobrious epithet of dogs. Upon which Æsop was called, and asked how he dared to affront the gentlemen. Æsop replied to his master, "Did you not tell me that none but philosophers should be admitted?"—"And what are these?" said Xanthus, "do they not merit that character?"—"By no means," answered Æsop, "for when they came to the gate I demanded of them, what stirs the dog, and but one among them all gave me a proper answer." Hereupon all agreed that Æsop had acted strictly as his master had commanded him.

THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE SNAKE.

A VILLAGER, in the midst of winter, found a snake under a hedge almost dead with cold: he could not help having compassion on the poor creature, so brought it home, and laid it upon the hearth near the fire; but it had not laid there long, before, being revived by the heat, it began to erect itself, and fly at his wife and children, filling the whole cottage with dreadful hissings and alarm. The countryman hearing an outcry, and perceiving what the matter was, caught up a mattock, and soon despatched him, upbraiding him at the same time in these words: "Is this, vile wretch! the reward you make to him who saved your life? Die as you deserve; though a single death is too good for you."

'Tis the nature of ingrates to return evil for good; and the moralists of all ages have incessantly declaimed against the enormity of this crime, concluding that they who are capable of hurting their benefactors, are not fit to live in a community; being such as the natural ties of parent, friend, or country, are too weak to restrain within the bounds of society. Indeed, the sin of ingratitude is so detestable, that, as none but the most inhuman temper can be guilty of it, so in writing to men, there is no occasion to use many words, either in exposing the vice itself, or in dissuading people from the commission of it. Therefore it is not likely that a person of Æsop's sagacity would have compiled this Fable without having something else in view, besides this trite and obvious subject. He certainly intended to put us in mind, that as none but a poor silly clown would go to take up a snake and cherish it, so we shall be very negligent and ill-advised, if, in doing good offices, we do not care to bestow our benevolence on proper objects. It was not at all unnatural for the snake to hiss and brandish his tongue, and fly at the first that came near him; as soon at the person that saved his life as any other; indeed, more likely, because nobody else had so much to do with him. Nor is it strange at any time to see a reprobate fool throwing his poisonous language about, and committing his extravagancies, more especially against those who are so inadvertent as to concern themselves with him. The snake and the reprobate will not appear extraordinary in their malevolence; but the sensible part of mankind, cannot help thinking those guilty of indiscretion, who receive either of them into their protection.



THE PHYSICIANS.

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Dr. Neverwell went to visit a patient, who was also attended by his rival Betterall. The latter held out hopes, although his comrade affirmed that the sick man was going to pay a visit to his forefathers. Each of them prescribed differently for the cure, and, as might be expected, their patient paid the tribute of nature, just as Neverwell had predicted. The two congratulated themselves on the case. One said: "He is dead, just as I foresaw."—"If he had followed my directions," said the other, "he would still be among the living."

THE VAIN JACKDAW.

A certain jackdaw was so proud and ambitious, that, not contented to live within his own sphere, he associated with a number of peacocks, and, as far as possible to assimilate with them, he used to pick up their moulted feathers and stick in among his own. They soon found him out, stripped him of his borrowed plumes, and falling upon him with their sharp bills, punished him as his presumption deserved. Upon this, full of grief and affliction, he returned to his old companions, and would have flocked with them again; but they, knowing his past life and conversation, industriously avoided and refused to admit him into their company; and one of them at the same time gave him this serious reproof: "If friend, you could have been contented with your station, and had not disdained the rank in which Nature had placed you, you had not been used so scurvily by those upon whom you intruded yourself, nor suffered the notorious slight which now we think ourselves obliged to put upon you."

THE STAG LOOKING INTO THE WATER.

A stag that had been drinking at a clear spring, saw himself in the water; and pleased with the prospect, stood afterwards for some time contemplating and surveying his shape and features from head to foot. "Ah!" said he, "what a glorious pair of branching horns are there! how gracefully do those antlers hang over my forehead, and give an agreeable turn to my whole face. If some other parts of my body were but proportionable to them, I would turn my back to nobody; but I have a set of such legs as really makes me ashamed to see them! People may talk what they please of their conveniences, and what great need we stand in of them upon several occasions, but for my part I find them so very slender and unsightly, that I had as soon have none at all." While he was giving himself these airs, he was alarmed with the noise of some huntsmen and a pack of hounds, that had just been laid on upon the scent, and were making towards him. Away he flies in much consternation, and bounding nimbly over the plain, threw dogs and men at a vast distance behind him. After which, taking a very thick copse, he had the ill luck to get entangled by his horns in a thicket, where he was held fast till the hounds came in and pulled him down. Finding now how

it was likely to go with him, in the pangs of death, he is said to have uttered these words:—"Unhappy creature that I am! I am too late convinced that what I prided myself in, has been the cause of my undoing; and what I so much disliked, was the only thing that could have saved me."

THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

An eagle that had young ones, looking out for something to feed them with, happened to spy a fox's cub that lay basking itself abroad in the sun; she made a stoop, and trussed it immediately; but before she carried it quite off, the old fox, coming home, implored her with tears in her eyes to spare her cub, and pity the distress of a poor fond mother, who would think no affliction so great as that of losing her child. The cagle, whose nest was up in a very high tree, thought herself secure enough from all projects of revenge, and so bore away the cub to her young ones, without shewing any regard to the supplications of the fox. But that subtle creature, highly incensed at this outrageous barbarity, ran to an altar where some country people had been sacrificing a kid in the open fields, and catching up a firebrand in her mouth, made towards the tree where the eagle's nest was, with a resolution of revenge. She had scarcely ascended the first branches, when the eagle terrified at the aproaching ruin of herself and family, begged of the fox to desist, and, with much submission, returned her the cub again safe and sound.

This Fable is a warning to us not to deal hardly or injuriously by anybody. The consideration of our being in a high condition of life, and those we hurt far below us, will plead little or no excuse for us in this case. For there is scarcely a creature of so despicable a rank, but is capable of avenging itself some way, and at some time or other.

THE FROGS AND THE FIGHTING BULLS.

A frog one day, peeping out of the marsh and looking about him, saw two bulls fighting at some distance off in the meadow, and calling to one of his acquaintance: "Look," said he, "what dreadful work is yonder! Dear sir, what will become of us!"—"Why, pray thee," said the other, "do not frighten yourself so about nothing; how can their quarrels affect us? They are of a different kind and way of living, and are at present only contending which shall be master of the herd."—"That is true," replied the first, "their quality and station in life is to all appearance different enough from ours; but as one of them will certainly get the better, he that is worsted, being beaten out of the meadow, will take refuge here in the marshes, and may possibly tread upon some of us: so you see we are more nearly concerned in this dispute of theirs, than at first you were aware of."

THE KITE AND THE PIGEONS.

A kite, who had kept sailing in the air for many days near a dove-house, and made a stoop at several pigeons, but to no purpose (for they were too nimble for him), at last had recourse to stratagem, and took this opportunity one day to make a declaration to them, in which he set forth his own just and good intentions;

having nothing more at heart than the defence and protection of the pigeons in their ancient rights and liberties, and how concerned he was at their fears and jealousies of a foreign invasion, especially their unjust and unreasonable suspicions of himself, as if he intended by force of arms to break in upon their constitution, and erect a tyrannical government over them. To prevent all which, and thoroughly quiet their minds, he thought proper to propose to them such terms of alliance and articles of peace as might for ever cement a good understanding betwixt them; the principal of which was, that they should accept him for their king, and invest him with all kingly privileges and prerogative over them. The poor simple pigeons consented: the kite took the coronation oath after a very solemn manner on his part; and the doves, the oaths of allegiance and fidelity on theirs. But much time had not passed, before the good kite pretended that it was a part of his prerogative to devour a pigeon whenever he pleased. And this he was not contented to do himself only, but instructed the rest of the royal family in the same kingly arts of government. The pigeons, reduced to this miserable condition, said one to the other: "Ah! we deserve no better! Why did we let him come in?"

This Fable applies to the exceeding blindness and folly of that part of mankind who wantonly trust their native rights and liberties without good security; who often choose for guardians of their lives and fortunes, persons abandoned to vice: and seldom have any better excuse for such an error in politics, than that they were deceived in their expectation, or never thoroughly knew the manners of their kings or representatives till they had got them entirely under their power. Many, indeed, like the doves in the Fable, are so silly, that they would admit of a kite rather than be without a king. The truth is, we ought not to incur the possibility of being deceived in so important a matter as this: unlimited power should not be trusted into the hands of any one, who is not endowed with more than human perfection.

THE STAG IN THE OX-STALL.

A STAG, roused out of his thick covert in the midst of the forest, and driven hard by the hounds, made towards a farm-house, and seeing the door of an ox-stall open, entered therein, and hid himself under a heap of straw. One of the oxen turning his head about, asked him what he meant by venturing himself in such a place as that was, where he was sure to meet with his doom. "Ah!" said the stag, "if you will but be so good as to favour me with your concealment, I hope I shall do well enough; I intend to make off again the first opportunity." He staid there, however, till towards night, when in came the cow-herd with a bundle of fodder, and never saw him. In short, all the servants of the farm came and went, and not a soul of them smelt anything of the matter. Nay, the bailiff himself came, according to form, and looked in, but walked away no wiser than the rest. Upon this the stag, ready to jump out of his skin for joy, began to return thanks to the good-natured oxen, protesting that they were the most obliging people he had ever met with in his life. After he had done his compliments, one of them answered him gravely: "Indeed, we desire nothing more than to have it in our power to contribute to your escape; but there is a certain person you little think of, who has a hundred eyes; if he should happen to come, I would not give this straw for your life." In the interim, home comes the master himself from a neighbour's, where he had been invited to dinner: and because he had

observed the cattle to look but scurvily of late, he went up to the rack, and asked why they did not give them more fodder? Then, casting his eyes downwards; "Hey-day!" said he, "why so sparing of your litter? pray scatter a little more here. And these cobwebs—but I have spoken so often, that unless I do it myself—" Thus, as he went on, prying into everything, he chanced to look where the stag's horns lay sticking out of the straw; upon which he raised a hue and cry, called all his people about him, killed the poor stag, and made a prize of him.

The moral of this Fable is, that nobody looks after a man's affairs so well as himself. Servants being but hirelings, seldom have the true interest of their master at heart, but yet things run on in a negligent, constant disorder, and this generally, not so much from want of capacity as honesty. Their heads are taken up with the cultivation of their own private interests; for the service and promotion of which, that of their master is postponed, and often entirely neglected. Few families are reduced to poverty and distress merely by their own extravagance and indulgence in luxury. The inattention of servants swells every article of expence in domestic economy; and the retinue of great men, instead of exerting their industry to conduce as far as possible to the increase of their master's wealth, commonly exercise no other office than that of locusts and caterpillars, to consume and devour it.

THE LAMB BROUGHT UP BY A GOAT.

A wolf meeting a lamb one day in company with a goat: "Child," said he, "you are mistaken, this is none of your mother, she is yonder," pointing to a flock of sheep at a distance. "It may be so," said the lamb; "the person that happened to conceive, and afterwards bore me in the course of nature, and not of choice or kindness, is, I suppose, what you call my mother; but I look upon this charitable goat as such, that took compassion on me in my poor, helpless, destitute condition, and gave me suck, sparing it out of the mouths of her own kids, rather than I should want it."—"But sure," said he, "you have a greater regard for her that gave you life than for anybody else."—"She gave me life! I deny that. She that could not so much as tell whether I should be black or white, had a great hand in giving me life, to be sure! But, supposing it were so, I am mightily obliged to her, truly, for contriving to let me be of the male kind, so that I go every day in danger of the butcher. What reason then have I to entertain a greater regard for one to whom I am so little indebted for any part of my being, than for those from whom I have received all the benevolence and kindness which have hitherto supported me in life."

THE PEACOCK'S COMPLAINT.

The peacock presented a memorial to Juno, importing how hardly he thought he was used in not having so good a voice as the nightingale, how that pretty animal was agreeable to every ear that heard it, while he was laughed at for his ugly, screaming noise, if he did but open his mouth. The goddess, concerned at the uneasiness of her favourite bird, answered him very kindly to this purpose: "If the nightingale is blest with a fine voice, you have the advantage in point of beauty and largeness of person."—"Ah!" said he, "but what avails my silent, unmeaning beauty, when I am so far excelled in voice!" The goddess dismissed him, bidding

him consider that the properties of every creature were appointed by a decree of fate: to him beauty; strength to the eagle; to the nightingale a voice of melody; the faculty of speech to the parrot; and to the dove innocence. That each of these was contented with his own peculiar quality; and unless he wished to be miserable, he must learn to be so too.

Since all things, as Juno says, are fixed by the eternal and unalterable decrees of Fate, how absurd it is to hear people complaining and tormenting themselves for that which it is impossible ever to obtain. They who are ambitious of having more good qualities, since that is impracticable, should spare no pains to cultivate and recommend those they have; which a sourness and peevishness of temper, instead of improving, will certainly lessen and impair, whether they be of the mind or body. If we had all the desirable properties in the world, we could be no more than easy or contented with them; and if a man, by a right way of thinking, can reconcile himself to his own condition, whatever it be, he will fall little short of the most complete state that mortals ever enjoyed.

THE FROG AND THE FOX.

A FROG, leaping out of the lake, and taking advantage of a rising ground, made proclamation to all the beasts of the forest that he was an able physician, and, for curing all manner of distempers, would turn his back to no person living. This discourse, uttered in a collection of sounding, but cramp words, which nobody understood, made the beasts admire his learning, and give credit to everything he said. At last the fox, who was present, indignantly asked him how he could have the impudence, with those thin lantern jaws, that meagre, pale phiz, and blotched, spotted body, to set up for one who was able to cure the infirmities of others.

A sickly, infirm look, is as disadvantageous in a physician, as that of a rake in a clergyman, or sheepishness in a soldier. If this moral contains anything further, it is that we should not set up for rectifying enormities in others, while we labour under the same ourselves. Good advice ought always to be followed, without our being prejudiced upon account of the person from whom it comes. But it is seldom that men can be brought to think us worth minding, when we prescribe cures for maladies with which ourselves are infected. "Physician, heal thyself," is too scriptural not to be applied upon such an occasion, and if we would avoid being the jest of an audience, we must be sound and free from those diseases of which we would endeavour to cure others. How shocked must people have been to hear a preacher for a whole hour declaim against drunkenness, when his own infirmity has been such, that he could neither bear nor forbear drinking; and perhaps was the only person in the congregation who made the doctrine at that time necessary. Others, too, have been very zealous in exploding crimes, for which, none were more suspected than themselves. But let such silly hypocrites remember, that they, whose eyes want couching, are the most improper people in the world for oculists.

THE FOX AND THE TIGER.

A SKILFUL archer coming into the woods, directed his arrows so successfully, that he slew many wild beasts, and pursued several others. This put the whole savage kind into fearful consternation, and made them fly to the most retired thickets for refuge. At last the tiger resumed courage, and bidding them not be afraid, said that he alone would engage the enemy, telling them they might depend upon his valour and strength to revenge their wrongs. In the midst of these threats,

while he was lashing himself with his tail, and tearing up the ground for anger, an arrow pierced his ribs, and hung by its barbed point in his side. He set up a hideous and loud roar, occasioned by the anguish which he felt, and endeavoured to draw out the painful dart with his teeth; when the fox, approaching him, enquired with an air of surprise who it was that could have strength and courage enough to wound so mighty and valorous a beast? "Ah!" said the tiger, "I was mistaken in my reckoning; it was that invincible man yonder."

Though strength and courage are very good ingredients towards the making us secure and formidable in the world, yet, unless there be a proper portion of wisdom or policy to direct them, instead of being serviceable, they often prove detrimental to the proprietors. A rash, froward man, who depends upon the excellence of his own parts and accomplishments, is apt to expose a weak side, which his enemies might not otherwise have observed, and gives an advantage to others by those very means which he fancied would have secured it to himself. Counsel and conduct always did, and always will, govern the world; and the strong, in spite of all their force, can never avoid being tools to the crafty. Some men are as much superior to others in wisdom and policy, as man in general is above a brute. Strength, ill-concerted, opposed to them, is like a quarter-staff in the hands of a huge, robust, but bungling fellow, who fights against a master of the science. The latter, though without a weapon, would have skill and address enough to disarm his adversary, and drub him with his own staff. In a word, savage fierceness and brutal strength must not pretend to stand in competition with finesse and stratagem.

THE MISCHIEVOUS DOG.

A CERTAIN man had a dog, which was so curst and mischievous, that he was forced to fasten a heavy clog about his neck to keep him from running out and worrying people. This the vain cur took for a badge of honourable distinction, and grew so insolent upon it, that he looked down with an air of scorn upon the neighbouring dogs, and refused to keep them company. But a sly old poacher, who was one of the gang, assured him that he had no reason to value himself upon the favour he wore, since it was fixed upon him rather as a mark of disgrace than of honour.

Some people are so exceedingly vain, and at the same time so dull of apprehension, that they interpret everything by which they are distinguished from others in their own favour. If they betray any weaknesses in conversation, which are apt to excite the laughter of their company, they make no scruple of ascribing it to the superiority of their wit. If want of sense or breeding (one of which is always the case) disposes them to give or mistake affronts, upon which account all discreet, sensible people are obliged to shun their company, they impute it to their own valour and magnanimity, to which they fancy the world pays an awful and respectful deference. There are several decent ways of preventing such turbulent men from doing mischief, which might be applied with secrecy, and many times pass unregarded, if their own arrogance did not require the rest of mankind to take notice of it.

THE FOX AND THE APE.

"TELL me any beast, however talented, which I cannot imitate!" boasted the ape to the fox.

The fox replied; "And thou, name me ever so worthless a beast which would trouble itself to imitate thee!"

THE OAK AND THE REED.

An oak, which hung over the bank of a river, was blown down by a violent storm of wind; and, as it was carried along by the stream, some of its boughs brushed against a reed which grew near the shore. This struck the oak with a thought of admiration, and he could not forbear asking the reed how he came to stand so secure and unhurt in a tempest, which had been furious enough to tear an oak up by the roots? "Why," said the reed, "I secure myself by putting on a behaviour quite contrary to what you do? instead of being stubborn and stiff, and confiding in my strength, I yield and bend to the blast and let it go over me,-knowing how vain and fruitless it would be to resist."

Though a tame submission to injuries which it is in our power to redress, be generally esteemed a base and dishonourable thing, yet to resist where there is no probability or even hope of our doing so effectively, may be looked upon as the effect of a blind temerity, if not of a weak understanding. The strokes of fortune are often as irresistible as they are severe; and he who, with an impatient, reluctant spirit, fights against her, instead of alleviating, does but double her blows upon himself. A person of a quiet, still temper, whether given him by nature, or acquired by art, calmly composes himself in the midst of a storm, so as to elude the shock, or receive it with the least detriment, like a prudent experienced sailor, who swimming to shore from a wrecked vessel in a swelling sea, does not oppose the fury of the waves, but stoops and gives way, that they may roll over his head without obstruction. The doctrine of absolute submission in all cases, is an absurd, dogmatical precept, with nothing but ignorance and superstition to support it: but upon particular occasions, and where it is impossible for us to overcome, to submit patiently is one of the most reasonable maxims in life.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

Two men being to travel through a forest together, mutually promised to stand by each other in any danger they should meet upon the way. They had not gone far before a bear came rushing towards them out of a thicket; upon which, one, being a light nimble fellow, got up into a tree; the other falling flat upon his face, and holding his breath, lay still, while the bear came up and smelled at him; but that creature, supposing him to be a dead carcase, went back again into the wood without doing him the least harm. When all was over, the spark who had climbed up the tree came, down to his companion, and with a pleasant smile asked him what the bear had said to him, "For," said he, "I took notice that he had clapt his mouth very close to your ear."—"Why," replied the other, "he charged me to take care for the future not to put any confidence in such cowardly rascals as you are."

Though nothing is more common than to hear people profess services of friendship, where there is no occasion for them, yet scarcely anything is so hard to be found as a true friend, who will assist us in time of danger and difficulty. All the declarations of kindness which are made to an experienced man, though accompanied by a squeeze of the hand, and a solemn asseveration, should leave no greater impression upon his mind, than the whistling of the hollow breeze which brushes one's ear with an unmeaning salute, and is presently gone. He that succours our necessity by well-timed assistance, though it were not ushered in by previous compliments, will ever after be looked upon as a friend and protector; and in so much greater a degree, as the favour was unasked and unpromised; as it was not extorted by importunities on the one side, nor led in by a numerous attendance of promises on the other. Words are nothing till they be fulfilled by actions; and therefore we should not suffer ourselves to be deluded by a vain hope and reliance upon the

JUPITER AND THE CAMEL.

The camel presented a petition to Jupiter, complaining of the hardships of his case, in not having horns like bulls, or any weapons of defence to protect himself from the attacks of his enemies, and prayed that relief might be given him in such manner as should be thought most expedient. Jupiter could not help smiling at the impertinent address of the silly beast; he, however, rejected the petition, and told him, that so far from granting his unreasonable request, henceforward he would take care his ears should be shortened, as a punishment for his presumptuous importunity.

THE BALD KNIGHT.

A certain knight growing old, his hair fell off and he became bald, to hide which imperfection he wore a periwig: but, as he was riding out with some others hunting, a sudden gust of wind blew off the periwig and exposed his bald pate. The company could not forbear laughing at the accident, and he himself laughed as loud as anybody, saying: "How was it to be expected that I should keep strange hair upon my head, when my own would not stay there?"

To be captious is not more uneasy to ourselves than it is disagreeable to others. As no man is entirely without faults, a few defects surrounded with a guard of good qualities, may pass muster well enough; but he whose attention is always upon the watch for something to take exception at, if he had no other bad quality, can never be acceptable. A captious temper, like a little leaven, sours a whole lump of virtues, and make us disrelish that which might otherwise be the most grateful conversation. If we would live easily to ourselves, and agreeably to others, we should be so far from seeking occasions of being angry, that sometimes we should let them pass unregarded when they came in our way; or, if they are so palpable that we cannot help taking notice of them, we should do well to rally them off with a jest, or dissolve them in good humour. Some people take a secret pleasure in nettling and fretting others; and the more practicable they find it to exercise this quality upon any one, the more does it whet and prompt their inclination to do it. But as this talent savours something of ill-nature, it deserves to be baffled and defeated; which one cannot do better, than by receiving all that is uttered at such a time with a cheerful aspect, and an ingenuous, pleasant, unaffected reply. Nor is the expedient of the bald knight unworthy of our imitation; for if, by any word or action, we happen to raise the laughter of those about us, we cannot stifle it sooner or better, than by a brisk presence of mind to join in mirth with the company, and if possible, to anticipate the jest which another is ready to throw out upon the occasion.

THE COCK AND THE JEWEL.

A brisk young cock, in company with two or three pullets, his mistresses, raking upon a dunghill for something to entertain them with, happened to scratch up a jewel; he knew well enough what it was, for it sparkled with exceeding lustre; but not knowing what to do with it, endeavoured to cover his ignorance under assumed contempt. So, shrugging up his wings, shaking his head, and putting on a grimace, he expressed himself to this purpose: "Indeed, you are a very fine thing; but I know not any business you have here. I make no scruple of declaring that my taste lies quite another way; and I had rather have one grain of delicious barley, then all the jewels under the sun."



THE CAT METAMORPHOSED INTO A WOMAN.

THE CAT METAMORPHOSED INTO A WOMAN.

A MAN was once distractedly fond of his cat; he thought her mild, beautiful and delicate, and that she cried with the softest of tones; indeed he doated worse than the maddest fool. This man, by his tears and entreaties, by sorcery and charms, managed to persuade destiny to transform his cat into a woman: and the same morning he hastened to make her his better half. Behold him, upon these events, as crazed with the wildest love as he was formerly mad with friendship. Never did the loveliest woman charm her most favoured lover so highly as did this novel wife her raving husband. He adores her; she flatters him; he can discover no remains of feline qualities about her, and his disordered imagination induces him to believe her a very woman in everything. On the nuptial night, however, some mice which were gnawing the floor, disturbed the pleasure of the newly wedded pair. The wife crept immediately from bed; but her so recently acquired posture accorded ill with her old occupation. However, she did not run in vain; for, having changed her form, the mice feared her no longer, and neglected the precautions they had formerly taken to secure their safety. The display of such propensities was a source of sore annoyance to the husband; but Nature will take her course: indeed, should you shut the door in her face, she would come in again by the window.

THE WOLF, A HERO.

"MY father, of glorious memory," said a young wolf to a fox, "was a true hero! He made himself dreaded by the whole neighbourhood! At various periods he triumphed over more than two hundred enemies, and sent their polluted souls to the Kingdom of Death. How can it be wondered at that he was at length compelled to yield to one."

"Thus would the writer of epitaphs express himself," said the fox: "the impartial historian, however, would add: 'the two hundred enemies he triumphed over at various periods, were sheep and asses; and the one enemy to whom he succumbed, was the first ox he ever dared to attack.'"

THE MOUSE AND THE WEASEL.

A LITTLE, starveling, thin-gutted rogue of a mouse, with much pushing and application, had made his way through a small hole into a corn-basket, where he stuffed and crammed so plentifully, that when he would have retired by the way he came, he found himself too plump, with all his endeavours, to accomplish it. A weasel, who stood at some distance, and had been diverting himself with beholding the vain efforts of the little fat thing, called to him and said: "Hark ye! honest friend! if you have a mind to make your escape, there is but one way for it; contrive to grow as poor and lean as you were when you entered, and then, perhaps, you may get off."

THE OLD HOUND.

An old hound, who had been an excellent one in his time, and had given his master great sport and satisfaction in many a chase, at last, by the effect of years, became feeble and unserviceable. However, being in the field one day when the stag was almost run down, he happened to be the first that came in with him, and seized him by one of his haunches: but his decayed and broken teeth not being able to keep their hold, the deer escaped, and threw him quite out. Upon which, his master being in a great passion and going to strike him, the honest old creature is said to have barked out this apology: "Ah! do not strike your poor old servant; it is not my heart and inclination, but my strength and speed that fail me. If what I am now displeases, pray do not forget what I have been."

This Fable may serve to give us a general view of the ingratitude of the greatest part of mankind. Notwithstanding all the civility and complaisance that is used among people where there is a common intercourse of business, yet, let the main-spring, the probability of their being serviceable to each other, either in point of pleasure or profit, be but once broken, and farewell courtesy: so far from continuing any regard for past favours, it is very well if they forbear doing anything that is injurious. If the master had only ceased to caress and make much of the old hound when he was past doing any service, it would not have been very strange; but to treat a poor creature ill, not for a failure of inclination, but merely a defect of nature, must, notwithstanding the crowd of examples there are to countenance it, be pronounced inhuman and unreasonable.

There are two accounts upon which people that have been useful are frequently neglected. One, when they are so decayed, either through age or some accident, that they are no longer able to do the services they had formerly done; the other, when the occasion or emergency which required such talents no longer exists. Phædrus, who more than once complains of the evil consequences of age, makes no other application to this Fable, than by telling his friend Philetus, with some regret, that he wrote it with such a view; having, it seems, been repaid with neglect, or worse usage, for services done in his youth to those who were then able to afford him a better recompense.

THE TORTOISE AND THE EAGLE.

The tortoise weary of his condition, by which he was constrained to keep upon the ground, and being ambitious to have a prospect and look about him, gave out that if any bird would take him up into the air and shew him the world, he would reward him with a discovery of many precious stones, which he knew were hidden in a certain place of the earth. The eagle undertook to do as he desired; and when he had performed his commission, demanded the reward: but finding the tortoise could not make good his words, he struck his talons into the softer parts of his body, and made him a sacrifice to his revenge.

As men of honour ought to consider calmly how far the things which they promise may be in their power, before they venture to make promises upon this account, because the non-performance of them will be apt to excite an uneasiness within themselves, and tarnish their reputation in the eyes of other people; so fools and cowards should be as little rash in this respect as possible, lest their impudent forgeries draw upon them the resentment of those whom they may disappoint, and that resentment makes them undergo smart, but deserved chastisement. The man who is so stupid a knave as to make a lying promise where he is sure to be detected, receives the punishment of his folly, unpitied by all who know him.

THE COURT AND COUNTRY MICE.

A CONTENTED country-mouse had once the honour to receive a visit from an old acquaintance belonging to the court. The country mouse, extremely glad to see her guest, very hospitably set before her the best cheese and bacon which her cottage afforded; and as to their beverage, it was the purest water from the spring. The repast was homely indeed, but the welcome hearty: they sate and chatted away the evening together very agreeably, and then retired in peace and quietnes each to her little cell. The next morning, when the guest was to take her leave, she kindly pressed her country friend to accompany her; setting forth, in very pompous terms, the great elegance and plenty in which she lived at court. The country-mouse was easily prevailed upon, and they set out together. It was late in the evening when they arrived at the palace; however, in one of the rooms they found the remains of a sumptuous entertainment. There were creams and jellies and sweetmeats, and everything, in short, of the most delicate kind: the cheese was Parmesan, and they wetted their whiskers in exquisite Champagne. But before they had half finished their repast, they were alarmed with the barking and scratching of a lap-dog; then the mewing of a cat frightened them almost to death; by-and-by, a whole train of servants burst into the room, and everything was swept away in an instant. "Ah! my dear frien d," said the country-mouse, as soon as she had recovered courage enough to speak, "if your fine living is thus interrupted with fears and dangers, let me return to my plain food and my peaceful cottage; for what is elegance without ease; or plenty, with an aching heart?"

This Fable has ever been a favourite with all classes and in all ages. The poets especially have made a bantling of it. The exemplification given by King James the first, and which was adopted by Sir Roger L'Estrange, was to exhibit the superiority of the quiet, independent life of the country, over the servility and insecurity of city existence. Pope makes it subservient to a general love of liberty, which he seems to consider, as indeed it would be held in the present day, a compensation in itself for most of the minor evils humanity is heir to. It may not be out of place here to notice that Pope's "Town and Country Mice" is little more than a paraphrase of the "City Mouse and Country Mouse" of Sir Roger L'Estrange. the language of which, as well as the local allusions, he has not been scrupulous in appropriating. We give an extract from Sir Roger's concluding "Reflections" as a specimen of his happiest style:

> "Free from the noise and bustle of the great,
> Grant me, oh Heaven, some little healthful seat,
> Where I in silence may pass on my life,
> And sleep secure from danger, noise and strife.
> How happy are the men that seldom range
> Beyond the limits of their native grange;
> Who, undisturbed, and from temptations free,
> Enjoy with ease their health and liberty."

An old Scottish version of the Fable is subjoined, for the length of which, the poetry, the graphic descriptions, witty dialogue and exquisite humour, must be our apology. The language of the original, which belongs to the fifteenth century, (Anno 1440) is in a great measure obsolete; and the liberty has, therefore, been taken to modernize the phraseology, as well as the orthography, where it was considered necessary.

THE BORROWSTOUNE MOUSE AND THE LANDWARD MOUSE.

ÆSOP relates a tale well worth renown,
Of two wee mice, and they were sisters dear,
Of whom the elder dwelt in Borrowstoune,
The younger wonnèd in the uplands near,
Right solitair' beneath the bush and briar;
While on the corn and grain of husbandmen,
As outlaws do, she made an easy fen'. *

The rural mouse, when came the winter tide,
Bore cold and hunger oft, and great distress;
The other mouse, that in the Burgh did bide,
Stood high at mart, and was a free Burgéss,
To pass toll free, *sans* custom, mair or less,
And freedom had to go where'er she list,
Among the cheese and meal, in ark or kist. †

And once, when summer days were bright and clear
She took in mind her sister up-on-land,
And longed to ken her welfare and her cheer,
And see what life she led beneath the wand:
Barefoot, alone, with palmer's staff in hand,
As pilgrim poor she passed out of the town,
To seek her sister both on dale and down.

Through many a weary way then did she walk;
Through moor and moss and wood, o'er bank and briar,
Calling, from hill to glen, from brae to balk:
"Come forth to me my own sweet sister dear,
And bless mine eyes." With that the mouse could hear,
And knew her voice, as kindly kinsfolk should;
She heard with joy and straight beside her stood.

Their kindly cheer was pleasant to be seen,
Their hearts with blitheness towards each other leapt,
A band of love was knit their breasts between;
And whiles they laughed, and whiles for joy they wept
Whiles sweetly kissed, and whiles in arms they crept
And fondled long, till, sobered in their mood,
They side by side sped to their chamber good.

* Defence. shift.

† Chest.

As I've heard say, this was a simple one,
  Of peat and fern, that artlessly was made;
A shieling low, beneath a trysting stone,
  Of which the entrance was not high nor braid;
  Into the same they went, nor were afraid,
Though neither fire nor candle there burnt bright;
In sooth, they seemed to have most fear of light.

When snugly housed were these two honest mice,
  The youngest sister to her buttery hied,
And brought forth nuts and peas instead of spice,
  And such plain cheer as she was wont provide;
  The Burgess mouse, sae pampered up with pride
Said: "Sister mine, is this your daily food?"—
"Why not?" quoth she: "dost think it is not good?"—

"Nay, by my soul, methinks it but a scorn."—
  "Madam," quoth she, "ye be the mair to blame,
My mother said, after that we were born,
  That thou and I both lay within her wame;
  I keep the good old tenour of the dame
And of my sire, and live in poverty,
For lands and rents were ne'er our property."

—"Sister," the elder said, "hold me excused,
  This diet rude and I can ne'er accord;
To tender meat my stomach still is used,
  For why, I fare as well as any lord.
  These withered nuts and peas, ere they be bored,
Will break my jaws and make my teeth full slender,
Which have been used, till now, to food more tender."

—"Well, sister, well then," quoth the rural mouse,
  "If thou canst choose such things as thou see'st here,
Both meat and drink, and herboury and house
  Shall be your own, if ye remain the year
  Ye shall be welcome, with right hearty cheer;
And that should make e'en messes that are rude,
'Mong friends and kindred, savoury and good.

"What pleasure is in feasts most delicate,
  When the host wears a dark and glowering brow?
A gentle heart is better recreate
  With welcome blithe, than dainty fare, I trow;
  A humble meal is better, ye'll allow,
So that good-will be carver at the board,
Than the cold luxuries wealth and pride afford."

But all this moral doctrine, hale and sound,
Could give the Burgess-mouse small will to sing.
And heavily she cast her visage down
On all the store her sister dear did bring;
Till, at the last, she said, with scornful fling:
" Sister, this victual and your homely feast
Could not suffice, were ye nae rural beast:

" Forsake this hole, then, come unto my place,
Both text and proof I will to you dispense,
That my Good Friday's better than your Pasc';
My refuse fragments worth your whole expence;
Castles and halls I have of sure defence;
Of cat and trap and bane I have nae dread.'
Her sister gave assent, and forth they sped

With noiseless steps, through the long corn and grass,
In wistful haste, full warily they crept;
The eldest as the guide before did pass,
The younger in her sister's footsteps kept;
At night they journied, and by day they slept;
Till one fair morning, ere the lav'rock rose,
They reached the Town, and sought the Burgher's house.

Nor far it was—but to a stately street
The Burgess led, and entered privily,
Without god-speed—and forthwith both were set,
Where, in a spence, good cheer alone was nigh.
Both cheese and butter fairly ranged on high,
And flesh and fowl and fish, both fresh and salt,
And store of bread and flour, and meal and malt.

When, afterwards, they were disposed to dine,
They said no grace, but went at once to meat,
Of every dish that cooks could erst divine,
Of roast, and stewed, and boil'd—both small and great;
The festal fare of Earls they counterfeit,
Except in this—they drank the water clear
Instead of wine—but still they made good cheer.

With merry eye and gladsome countenance,
The elder sister questioned thus her guest,—
If yet she thought there were much difference
Betwixt that chamber and her sorry nest?—
" Yea, sister dear," quoth she, " but will this last?"—
" Last!" said the Burgess, with a smile; " I trow,
It will for aye, and may-be longer too."

To aid the cheer, in plenty forth she brought
A plate of grots and a large dish of meal
And tray of cakes; I wist she spared in nought
But right abundantly with all did deal:
Delicious furmage closed the dainty meal,
And then a candle from a coffer nigh
For their desert was ta'en, full cheerily.

They merry made till they could eat nae mair,
Then in a song they lift' their voices high;
But after joy there often-times comes care,
And trouble after great prosperity;
Thus as they sat, in all their jollity,
The butler thither came with keys in hand,
Opened the door and them at dinner fa'nd

They tarried not to wash, ye may suppose,
But off they ran, who first might shelter win;
The Burgess had a hole, and in she goes,
Her sister had no place to hide her in;
To see that silly mouse were grief and sin;
So scared, so void of sense, which way to fly!
For very fear she swoonéd like to die.

But as Jove will'd, it fell a happy case,
The butler had not leisure long to bide,
Neither to search, to rout, or to make chase,
But on he went and cast the door ope' wide;
The Burgess soon the passage clear espied,
Out of her hole she came and cried on high:
"My sister, speak, wherever thou dost lie."

The Landward mouse lay flat upon the ground,
And for her life she was full sore afraid,
While to her heart struck many a woeful wound,
And feverishly she sweat for very dread;
In such sad plight her sister found her laid,
And then for pity she began to greit;
Next comfort brought, in words as honey sweet.

"Why lie ye thus," said she, "my sister dear?
Come to your meat, this peril is o'er-past."
The other answered with a heavy cheer,
"I cannot eat, so sore I am aghast,
I rather would for forty long days fast,
Or live on withered nuts and beans and peas,
Than have such feasts, with dread and little ease."

With words of comfort then she bade her rise,
  To board they went and down together sat,
But scarcely had she drunken once or twice
  When in came mousing *Gib*, the jolly cat,
  And bade god-speed. The Burgess quickly gat
Up to her hole, fleeing like fire from flint,
But Baudrons did her sister's travel stint.

From foot to foot he cast her to and fro,
  Now up, now down, as she were wood or stone,
Now would he let her run both high and low,
  Then stretched him out and wink'd to hear her moan;
  Thus to the Landward mouse great harm was done,
Till at the last, while puss was bent on play,
She 'twixt the wall and dresser crept away.

Then up in haste behind the pannelling.
  So high she clombe that Gibby might not get her,
And to the boarding did so closely cling
  Till he was gone,—her plight was all the better,
  Then down she leapt when there was none to let her;
And to the Burgess mouse aloud did cry:
"Sister farewell, hence I thy feasts defy.

"Were I but once within my humble shed,
  For weal or woe, I ne'er would come again."
With that she took her leave and homeward sped,
  Through the tall harvest corn, and o'er the plain,
  And, now her way was free, her heart was fain,
And merrily she danced across the moor,
Until she reached her happy cottage door.

At home once more, she learn'd to love the state
  At which full oft before she had repined,
And envied not the wealthy or the great,
  While with good store her cupboards all were lined;
  With rye and wheat and nuts, best of their kind,
And Freedom—foe to cankerous dread and care;
That aye brings blessing to the homeliest fare.

There is a "Moralitie," of four stanzas appended to this Fable, from which, however, as it contains the substance of the whole, it will be sufficient to extract one.

"Friend, thy own fire, though but a single gleid,
  Will warm thee well, and be worth gold to thee;
And Solomon the sage says,—(if ye read,)
  'Under the heaven I can nought better see,
  Than aye be blithe and live in honesty;'
Wherefore I may conclude me with this reason,
  Of earthly bliss it bears the best degree,
Blithness of heart, in peace, with small possession."



THE BITCH AND HER FRIEND.

THE BITCH AND HER FRIEND.

A BITCH being near her confinement, and not knowing where to deposit such a weighty burden, managed so well, that at last her friend consented to lend her her house, where she at once ensconced herself. After some time her friend returns. The bitch begs for another fortnight; her little ones, she said, could scarcely walk. In short, she obtained what she asked for. The second period elapsed, the other again requests possession of her house, her room and bed. This time the bitch shews her teeth and says: "I am ready to go out with all my troop, if you can turn us out." Her children were already strong.

We always regret that which we give to the wicked. To recover from them what we lend, it is necessary to come to blows; we are compelled to go to law. Give them an inch, and they'll take an ell.

THE LAURUSTINUS AND THE ROSE-TREE.

IN the quarters of a shrubbery, where deciduous plants and ever-greens were intermingled with an air of negligence, it happened that a rose grew not far from a laurustinus. The rose, enlivened by the breath of June, and attired in all its gorgeous blossoms, looked with much contempt on the laurustinus, which had nothing to display but the dusky verdure of its leaves. "What a wretched neighbour," cried she, "is this! and how unworthy to partake the honour of my company! Better to bloom and die in the desert than to associate myself here with such low and dirty vegetables. And is this my lot at last, whom every nation has agreed to honour, and every poet conspired to reverence as the undoubted sovereign of the field and garden? If I really am so, let my subjects at least keep their distance, and let a circle remain vacant round me, suitable to the state my rank requires. Here, gardener, bring thy hatchet; prithee cut down this laurustinus; or at least remove it to its proper sphere."—"Be pacified, my lovely rose," replied the gardener; "enjoy thy sovereignty with moderation, and thou shalt receive all the homage which thy beauty can require. But remember that, in winter, when neither thou nor any of thy tribe produce one flower or leaf to cheer me, this faithful shrub, which thou despisest, will become the glory of my garden. Prudence, therefore, as well as gratitude is concerned in the protection of a friend that will shew his friendship in adversity."

THE MARMOT AND THE ANT.

"MISERABLE insect," exclaimed a marmot to an ant; "what avails it, that you toil throughout the summer, to collect such insignificant stores?—Could you but see my stock of provisions!"—

"Listen," replied the ant: "since it is so much larger than you require, nothing can be more just than that mankind should dig after you, empty your barns, and make you pay the forfeit of your life for your thievish avarice."

THE WOOD AND THE CLOWN.

A COUNTRY fellow came one day into the wood, and looked about him with some concern; upon which the trees, with a curiosity natural to some other creatures, asked him what he wanted. He replied that he wanted only a piece of wood to make a handle to his hatchet. That being all, it was voted unanimously that he should have a piece of good, sound, tough ash. But he had no sooner received and fitted it for his purpose, than he began to lay about him unmercifully, and to hack and hew, without distinction, felling the noblest trees in the forest. Then the oak is said to have spoken thus to the beech, in a low whisper: "Brother, we must take our fate for our pains."

No people are more justly liable to suffer than they who furnish their enemies with assistance. It is generous to forgive; it is enjoined us by religion to love our enemies; but he who trusts an enemy, and contributes to the strengthening and arming of him, may almost depend upon repenting his inadvertent benevolence, and has, moreover, this to add to his distress, that when he might have prevented it, he brought his misfortunes upon himself by his own credulity.

THE ANT AND THE FLY.

ONE day there happened some words between the ant and the fly about precedence, and the point was argued with great warmth and eagerness on both sides. Says the fly: "It is well known what my pretensions are, and how justly grounded. There is never a sacrifice offered, but I always taste of the entrails, even before the gods themselves. I have one of the uppermost seats at church, and frequent the altar as often as anybody. I have a free admission at court, and can never want the king's ear, for I sometimes sit upon his shoulder. There is not a maid of honour or handsome young creature comes in my way, but, if I like her, I settle between her balmy lips. And then I eat and drink the best of everything, without having any occasion to work for my living. What is there that such country pusses as you enjoy, to be compared to a life like this?" The ant, who by this time had composed herself, replied, with a great deal of temper, and no less severity: "Indeed, to be a guest at the entertainment of the gods is a very great honour, if one is invited, but I do not care to be a disagreeable intruder anywhere. You talk of the king and the court, and the fine ladies there, with great familiarity; but, as I have been getting in my harvest in summer, I have seen a certain person, under the town walls, making a hearty meal upon something that is not so proper to be mentioned. As to your frequenting the altars, you are in the right to take sanctuary where you are likely to meet with least disturbance; but I have known people before now run to altars, and call it devotion, when they have been shut out of all good company and had nowhere else to go. You don't work for your living, you say: true—therefore when you have played away the summer, and winter comes, you have nothing to live upon: and, while you are starving with cold and hunger, I have a good warm house over my head and plenty of provisions about me."

THE WATER-FALL.

From the head of a narrow valley that is wholly overshaded by the growth of trees, a large cascade bursts forth with a luxuriance unexpected. First the current rushes down a precipice with headlong impetuosity; then, dashed from rock to rock, and divided as it rolls along by fragments of stone or trunks of trees, it assumes a milk-white appearance, and sparkles through the gloom. All is intricacy; all is profusion: and the tide, however ample, appears yet more considerable by the fantastic growth of roots that hide the limits of its channel. Thus, bounding down from one descent to another, it no sooner gains the level than it sinks beneath the earth and buries all its glory at our feet.

A spectator, privy to the scanty source which furnished out this grand appearance, stood one day in a musing posture, and began to moralise on its prodigality. "Ah, silly stream!" said he, "why wilt thou hasten to exhaust thy source, and thus wilfully incur the contempt that waits on poverty? Art thou ignorant that thy funds are by no means equal to this expence?"—"Fear not, my kind adviser," replied the generous cascade; "the gratitude I owe my master, who collected my rills into a stream, induces me to entertain his friends in the best manner I am able; when alone, I act with more economy."

THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

A nurse, who was endeavouring to quiet a froward, bawling child, among other things threatened to throw it out of doors to the wolf, if it did not leave off crying. A wolf, who chanced to be prowling near the door just at the time, heard the expression, and believing the woman to be in earnest, waited a long time about the house in expectation of seeing her words made good. But at last the child wearied with its own importunities, fell asleep, and the poor wolf was forced to return to the woods empty and supperless. The fox, meeting him, and surprised to see him go home so thin and disconsolate, asked him what the matter was, and how he came to speed no better that night? "Ah! do not ask me," said he; "I was so silly as to believe what the nurse said, and have been disappointed."

To this Fable Dr. Croxall appends the following application:—"All the moralists have agreed to interpret this Fable as a caution to us never to trust a woman. What reasons they could have for giving so rough and uncourtly a precept, is not easy to be imagined; for, however fickle and unstable some women may be, it is well known there are innumerable others who have a greater regard for truth in what they assert or promise than most men. There is not room in so short a compass as can be bestowed in this place to express a due concern for the honour of the ladies, nor to shew how much one is disposed to vindicate them: and though there is nothing bad which can be said of them, but may, with equal justice, be averred of the other sex, yet one would not venture to give them so absolute a precaution as the old mythologists have affixed to this Fable, but only to advise them to consider well and thoroughly of the matter before they trust any man living." Our own impression of the author's meaning is simply this;—that little regard should be paid to promises or threats which are in themselves of an improbable nature.

THE BLACK AND RED LOBSTERS.

"My friend, ill-fated Spikey is no more!"
  A pensive lobster sighed on Norway's coast,
And mourning for his friend it seemed he wore,
  For he was black as good King Henry's ghost.

Sorrow sat heavy on that lobster's soul;
  And, though I cannot say he *tuned his shell,*
His anguish thus gained speech, which on the whole,
  His purpose answered possiblv as well.

"I grieve that Spikey's dead, nor is this all,
  For of my friend defunct, alas! 'tis said,
His colour he deserted in his fall,
  Abandoning the black, and dying red.

"I little thought that one I loved so well
  Would prove a recreant in his parting breath,
Nor dreamed insulting enemies would tell
  That he could basely change in life or death.

"But former lobsters, history tells, were found,
  Proud of their coat in youth's bright day, who when
Temptations, dangers, woes, came thickening round,
  Could meanly change it, as if only men.

"What if 'tis true as some reports have spread,
  That horrid warmth to torture him begun,
That fearful heat assailed both claw and head,
  Worse than the noontide glow of summer's sun.

"Still I had hoped a lobster, firm and true,
  Had held himself superior to a prawn,
And fixed to countenance no varying hue,
  Died a black-bright example to his spawn.

"For me, if mighty callipers should clasp,
  And bear me to the hottest liquid track,
Faithful to honour, with my latest gasp,
  I'd perish as I lived,—sublimely black.

"I, in the fiercest storm that ever raved,
  When thunder's roar has other fish unnerved,
My colour, lose what else I might, I saved,
  And never from it pitifully swerved.

"Whatever chance it may be mine to know
(And I may into awful peril rush),
It never shall be said by friend or foe,
That ignominiously 'twas mine to blush."

He spoke, that all the people of the main
Should know him thus determined was his wish,
Nor pitied, while indulged this lofty strain,
The weakness of another shelly fish.

But having most magnanimously bawled
In accents fit for the heroic lyre,
A fisherman secured him as he sprawled,
And dropped him in a kettle on the fire.

And oh! when this calamity involved,
That resolution, which could never bend,
In boiling water instantly dissolved,
And he himself turned scarlet as his friend.

MORAL.

Thus men on others' foibles who declaim,
And look on neighbours with disdainful eyes,
Prove in like circumstances just the same,
And grow unconsciously what they despise.

And women too, whose scorn no sister spares,
Frailty pursuing with relentless hate,
Find themselves overtaken unawares,
And wake to share and merit the same fate.

THE BLIND MAN AND THE LAME.

'Tis from our wants and infirmities that almost all the connections of society take their rise.

A blind man, being stopped in a bad piece of road, meets with a lame man and entreats him to guide him through the difficulty he had got into. "How can I do that," replied the lame man, "since I am scarcely able to drag myself along? But, as you appear to be very strong, if you will carry me, we will seek our fortunes together. It will then be my interest to warn you of anything that may obstruct your way: your feet shall be my feet, and my eyes yours."—"With all my heart," returned the blind man; "let us render each other our mutual services." So taking his lame companion on his back, they, by means of their union travelled on with safety and pleasure.

THE HORSE AND THE STAG.

The stag, by his sharp horns, gained the ascendancy of the horse, and drove him clear out of the pasture where they used to feed together. So the latter craved the assistance of man, and, in order to receive the benefit of it, suffered him to put a bridle into his mouth, and a saddle upon his back. By this proceeding he entirely defeated his enemy; but was much disappointed, when, upon returning thanks and desiring to be dismissed, he received this answer: "I never knew before how useful a drudge you were: but now I have found what you are good for, you may depend on it I will keep you within tether."

The foregoing Fable was intended to caution us against consenting to anything that might prejudice public liberty, but it may also serve to keep us upon our guard in the preservation of that which is private. This is the use and interpretation given of it by Horace, the best poet, and one of the most polite philosophers of his age. After reciting the Fable, he applies it thus: "This is the case of him, who, dreading poverty, parts with that invaluable jewel, liberty; like a wretch as he is, he will be subject to a tyrant of some kind and be a slave for ever, because his avaricious spirit knew not how to be contented with the moderate competency which he might have possessed independent of all the world."

THE SPARROWS.

An old church, in the chinks of which the sparrows had built innumerable nests, was repaired. As it stood in its new lustre, the sparrows returned to look for their old dwellings; but they found them all bricked up. "Of what earthly use," cried they, can so large a building now be? Come, let us leave the useless heap of stones to its fate!"

THE LYNX AND THE MOLE.

Under the covert of a thick wood, at the foot of a tree, as a lynx lay whetting his teeth, and waiting for his prey; he espied a mole half buried under a hillock of her own raising. "Alas! poor creature," said the lynx, "how much I pity thee! Surely Jupiter has been very unkind, to debar thee from the light of the day which rejoices the whole creation. Thou art certainly not above half alive; and it would be doing thee a service, to put an end to so inanimate a being."—"I thank you for your kindness," replied the mole, "but I think I have full as much vivacity as my state and circumstances require. For the rest, I am perfectly well contented with the faculties Jupiter has allotted me, who, I am sure wants not our direction in distributing his gifts with propriety. I have not, 'tis true, your piercing eyes; but I have ears which answer all my purposes fully as well. Hark! for example, I am warned by a noise which I hear behind you, to fly from danger." So saying he sunk into the earth; while a javelin from the arm of a hunter pierced the quick-sighted lynx to the heart.

THE BOAR AND THE ASS.

A LITTLE scoundrel of an ass happening to meet with a boar, had a mind to be arch upon him. "And so, brother," said he, "your humble servant." The boar, somewhat nettled at his familiarity, bristled up to him and told him he was surprised to hear him utter so impudent an untruth, and was just going to shew his noble resentment, by giving him a rip in the flank; but, wisely stifling his passion, he contented himself with only saying: "Go you sorry beast. I could be amply and easily revenged on you, but I do not care to foul my tusks with the blood of so base a creature."

THE LION AND THE FOUR BULLS.

FOUR bulls, that had entered into a strict friendship, kept always near each other and fed together. The lion often saw them, and as often had a mind to make one of them his prey; but, though he could easily have subdued any of them singly, yet he was afraid to attack the whole alliance, knowing they would have been too hard for him, and therefore he contented himself for the present with keeping at a distance. At last, perceiving no attempt was to be made upon them as long as this combination held, he took occasion, by whispers and hints to foment jealousies and raise divisions among them. This stratagem succeeded so well, that the bulls grew cold and reserved towards one another, which soon after ripened into downright hatred and aversion, and at last ended in a total separation. The lion had now obtained his end; and, impossible as it was to hurt them while they were united, he found no difficulty, now they were parted, to seize and devour every bull of them, one after another.

The moral of this Fable is so well known and allowed, that to go about to enlighten it, would be holding a candle to the sun. "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand," undisputed a maxim as it is, was, however, thought necessary to be urged to the attention of mankind by the best man that ever lived. Since, therefore, friendships and alliances are of such importance to our well-being and happiness, we cannot be too often cautioned not to let them be broken by tale-bearers and whisperers, or any other contrivance of our enemies.

THE SNIPE SHOOTER.

As a sportsman ranged the fields with his gun, attended by an experienced old spaniel, he happened to spring a snipe, and almost at the same instant, a covey of partridges. Surprised at the accident, and divided in his aim, he let fly too indeterminately, and by this means missed them *both*. "Ah! my good master," said the spaniel, "you should never have two aims at once. Had you not been dazzled and seduced by the luxurious hope of partridge, you would most probably have secured your snipe.'

THE ASS AND THE RACE-HORSE.

An ass undertook to run a race with the horse. The result was as might have been expected, and the ass got laughed at. "I now see what was the matter with me," said the donkey; "I ran a thorn into my foot some months ago, and it still pains me."

THE BLIND HERCULES.

A man, endow'd with giant might,
Found, when by Fate deprived of sight,
His foe he never more could beat,
But still came off with a defeat.

The wags at will his rage provoke;
Dare him to fight, and shun his stroke.
Spreads he his arms? They duck beneath,
And laugh to see the blow of death,
Batter the stones, and hurl them high,
Directed still with aim awry.
Thus, from the dread, he grew the jest
Of those his power should have repress'd.

At length, kind Heaven relief supplies,
And clears the mist that dimm'd his eyes.
Our Hercules his sight regains,
And peace with sight at once obtains.
Those, in his blindness most unjust,
Now to his generous mercy trust;
To brave his wrath would cost them dear;
The hour he saw renew'd their fear.

THE HARE'S EARS.

An elk having accidentally gored a lion, the monarch was so exasperated, that he sent forth an edict, commanding all horned beasts on pain of death, to depart his dominions. A hare observing the shadow of his ears, was much alarmed at their long and lofty appearance; and running to one of her friends, acquainted him that she was resolved to quit the country: "For should I happen," said she, "however undesignedly, to give offence to my superiors, my ears may be construed to come within the horn-act." Her friend smiled at her apprehensions, and asked how it was possible that ears could be mistaken for horns? "Had I no more ears than an ostrich," replied the hare, "I would not trust them in the hands of an informer: for truth and innocence are arguments of little force, against the logic of power and malice in conjunction."



THE OLD MAN AND DEATH.

THE OLD MAN AND DEATH.

A FEEBLE old man, quite spent with carrying a burthen of sticks, which, with much labour, he had gathered in a neighbouring wood, called upon Death to release him from the fatigues he endured. Death, hearing the invocation, was immediately at his elbow, and asked him what he wanted. Frightened and trembling at the unexpected appearance: "O good sir!" said he, "my burthen had like to have slipped from me, and being unable to recover it myself, I only implored your assistance to replace it on my shoulders."

THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

A CERTAIN man had two children, a son and a daughter. The boy healthful and handsome enough, the girl not quite so well. They were both very young, and happened one day to be playing near the looking-glass, which stood on the mother's toilet. The boy, pleased with the novelty of the thing, viewed himself for some time, and in a wanton, roguish manner, took notice to the girl how handsome he was. She resented it, and could not bear the insolent manner in which he did it; for she understood it, and how could she do otherwise, as intended for a direct affront to her. She, therefore, ran immediately to her father, and, with a great deal of aggravation, complained of her brother, particularly for having acted so effeminate a part as to look in a glass, and meddle with things which belong to women only. The father, embracing them both with much tenderness and affection, told them, that he should like to have them both look in the glass every day, "To the intent that you," said he to the boy, "if you think that face of yours handsome, may not disgrace and spoil it by an ugly temper and foul behaviour; and you," speaking to the girl, "that you may make up for the defects of your person, if there be any, by the sweetness of your manners, and the agreeableness of your conversation."

This Fable, notwithstanding the scene of it is laid at the very beginning and entrance of life, utters a doctrine worthy the attention of every stage and degree thereof, from the child to the old man. Let each of us take a glass, and view himself considerately. He that is vain and self-conceited, will find beauties in every feature, and his whole shape will be without fault. Let it be so; yet, if he would be complete, he must take care that the inward man does not detract from and disgrace the outward; that the depravity of his manners does not spoil his face, nor the wilfulness of his behaviour distort his limbs; or, which is the same thing, make his whole person odious and detestable in the eyes of beholders. Is any one modest in this respect, and deficient of himself? Or has he indeed blemishes and imperfections, which may depreciate him in the sight of mankind? Let him strive to improve the faculties of the mind, where, perhaps, nature has not cramped him, and to excel in the beauties of a good temper and an agreeable conversation, the charms of which are so much more lasting and unalterably endearing than those of the other sort. They who are beautiful in person have this peculiar advantage, that, with a moderate regard to complaisance and good manners, they bespeak every one's opinion in their favour. But then, be the outside of a man ever so rough and uncouth, if his acquired accomplishments are but sweet and engaging, how easily do we overlook the rest, and value him, like an oriental jewel, not by a glittering outside, which is common to baser stones, but by his intrinsic worth, his bright imagination, his clear reason, and the transparent sincerity of his honest heart.

PAIRING TIME ANTICIPATED.

I SHALL not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau *
If birds confabulate or no;
'Tis clear that they were always able
To hold discourse,—at least, in Fable;
And even the child, who knows no better
Then to interpret by the letter
A story of a cock and bull,
Must have a most uncommon skull.
  It chanc'd, then, on a winter's day,
But warm and bright, and calm as May,
The birds conceiving a design
To forestal sweet Saint Valentine,
In many an orchard, copse, and grove,
Assembled on affairs of love,
And, with much twitter and much chatter,
Began to agitate the matter.
At length a bull-finch, who could boast
More years and wisdom than the most,
Entreated, opening wide his beak,
A moment's liberty to speak;
And, silence publicly enjoin'd,
Briefly deliver'd thus his mind.
  "My friends! be cautious how ye treat
The subject upon which we meet;
I fear we shall have winter yet."
  A finch, whose tongue knew no control,
With golden wings and satin poll,
A last year's bird, who ne'er had tried
What marriage means, thus pert replied.
  "Methinks the gentleman," quoth she,
"Opposite in the apple-tree,
By his good-will, would keep us single
'Till yonder heav'n and earth shall mingle;
Or, which is likelier to befal,
'Till death exterminate us all.
I marry without more ado:
My dear Dick Redcap, what say you?"
  Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,
Turning short round, strutting and sideling,
Attested, glad, his approbation
Of an immediate conjugation.

* It was one of the whimsical speculations of this philosopher, that all Fables which ascribe reason and speech to animals should be withheld from children, as being only vehicles of deception. But what child was ever deceived by them, or can be, against the evidence of his senses?

Their sentiments so well express'd,
Mightily influenced the rest,
All pair'd and each pair built a nest.
But though the birds were thus in haste,
The leaves came on not quite so fast,
And destiny, that sometimes bears
An aspect stern on man's affairs.
Not altogether smiled on theirs.
The wind, of late breathed gently forth.
Now shifted east and east-by-north;
Bare trees and shrubs but ill, you know,
Could shelter them from rain or snow.
Stepping into their nests, they paddled;
Themselves were chill'd, their eggs were addled;
Soon every father-bird and mother,
Grew quarrelsome, and peck'd each other,
Parted without the least regret,—
Except that they had ever met:
And learned in future to be wiser
Than to neglect a good adviser.

Misses! the tale that I relate,
This lesson seems to carry—
Choose, not alone a proper mate,
But proper time to marry.

THE MUSHROOM AND THE ACORN.

An acorn fell from the top of an old, venerable oak, full on the head of a mushroom that unhappily sprung up beneath it. Wounded by the blow, the mushroom complained of the incivility. "Impertinent upstart," replied the acorn, "why didst thou, with familiar boldness, approach so near to thy superiors? Shall the wretched offspring of a dunghill, presume to raise its head on a spot ennobled by my ancestors for so many generations?"—"I do not mean," returned the mushroom, "to dispute the honour of thy birth, or to put my own in competition with it. On the contrary, I must acknowledge that I hardly know whence I sprung. But sure it is merit, and not mere ancestry, that obtains the regard of those whose approbation is truly valuable. I have little, perhaps, to boast, but surely thou. who hast thus insulted me, canst have no pretence to boast any. I please the palates of mankind, and give a poignant flavour to their most elegant entertainments; whilst thou, with all the pride of thy ancestry, art fit only to fatten hogs.

We adopt, as the Moral of this Fable, the following passage from the Saga of Frithioff, a Swedish Poem.

"Poor is the pride a father's honours lend;—
Is the bow thine, unless thine arm can bend?—
Can the dead's buried glories profit thee?—
On its own waves the stream must reach the sea."

THE EAGLE, THE CAT, AND THE SOW.

An eagle had built her nest on the top branches of an old oak, a wild cat inhabited a hole in the middle, and in the hollow part at the bottom was a sow with a whole litter of pigs. A happy neighbourhood, which might long have continued so, had it not been for the wicked insinuations of the designing cat. For, first of all, up she crept to the eagle: "Good neighbour," said she, "we shall be all undone; that filthy sow yonder does nothing but lie rooting at the foot of the tree, and, as I suspect, intends to grub it up, that she may the more easily come at our young ones. For my part, I will take care of my own concerns, you may do as you please, but I will watch her motions, though I stay at home this month for it." When she had said this, which could not fail of putting the eagle into a great fright, down she went and made a visit to the sow at the bottom; when putting on a sorrowful face: "I hope," said she, "you do not intend to go abroad to-day?"—Why not?" said the sow. "Nay replied the other, "you may do as you please; but I overheard the eagle tell her young ones, that she would treat them with a pig the first time she saw you go out, and I am not sure but she may take up a kitten in the mean time, so, good morrow to you; you will excuse me, I must go and take care of the little folks at home." Away she went accordingly; and by contriving to steal out softly at night for her prey, and to stand watching and peeping all day at her hole, as if under great concern, she made such an impression upon the eagle and sow, that neither of them dared to venture abroad for fear of the other. The consequence of which was, that themselves and their young ones, in a little time, were all starved and made prizes by the treacherous cat and her kittens.

This shews us the ill consequences which may attend the giving ear to a gossiping, double-tongued neighbour. The mischiefs occasioned by such credulity are innumerable, and too notorious not to be observed everywhere. Many sociable, well disposed families have been kept in perpetual discord and aversion by one of these wicked go-betweens. Whoever, therefore, would thoroughly acquit himself of the imputation of being a bad neighbour, should guard himself both against receiving ill-impressions from hearsay, and uttering his opinion of others to inquisitive busy-bodies, who, in case of scandal, can magnify a gnat to the size of a camel, and swell a molehill into a mountain.

THE MAN AND HIS GOOSE.

A certain man had a goose, that laid him a golden egg every day; but not contented with this, which rather increased than abated his avarice, he was resolved to kill the goose and cut her open, so that he might come at the inexhaustible treasure which he fancied she had within her. He did so, and to his great sorrow and disappointment found nothing.

Those who are of such craving, impatient tempers, that they cannot live contented when fortune has blessed them with a constant and continued sufficiency, deserve to be deprived even of what they have. And this has been the case with many ambitious and covetous men, who by essaying to grow rich at once, have missed what they aimed at, and lost what they had before.

THE SPECTACLES.

How strangely all mankind differ in their opinions! and how strongly each is attached to his own!

Jupiter one day, enjoying himself over a bowl of nectar, and in a merry humour, determined to make mankind a present. Momus was appointed to convey it to them; who, mounted on a rapid car, was presently on earth. "Come hither," said he, "ye happy mortals; great Jupiter has opened for your benefit his all-gracious hands. It is true, he made you somewhat short-sighted, but to remedy that inconvenience, behold how he has favoured you." So saying, he unloosed his portmanteau, when an infinite number of spectacles tumbled out, and were picked up by the crowd with all the eagerness imaginable. There were enough for all; every man had his pair: but it was soon found that these spectacles did not represent objects to all mankind alike; for one pair was purple, another blue; one was white, and another black: some of the glasses were red, some green, and some yellow. In short, they were of all manner of colours, and every shade of colour. However, notwithstanding this diversity, every man was charmed with his own, as believing it the truest, and enjoyed in opinion all the satisfaction of reality.

THE SNAKE AND THE HEDGE-HOG.

It is by no means prudent to join interests with such as have it in their power to impose upon us their own conditions.

By the entreaties of a hedge-hog, half starved with cold, a snake was once persuaded to receive him into her cell. He had no sooner entered than his prickles began to be very uneasy to his companion; upon which, the snake desired he would provide himself another lodging, as she found upon trial the apartment was not large enough to accommodate both. "Nay," said the hedge-hog, "let them that are uneasy in their situation exchange it; for my part, I am very well contented where I am: as you are not, you are welcome to remove whenever you think proper."

THE PARTIAL JUDGE.

A farmer went to a neighbouring lawyer, and expressed great concern for an accident which he said had just happened. "One of your oxen," he went on, "has been gored by an unlucky bull of mine, and I should be glad to know how I am to make you reparation."—"Thou art a very honest fellow," replied the lawyer, "and wilt not think it unreasonable that I expect one of thy oxen in return?"—"It is no more than justice," quoth the farmer, "to be sure; but what did I say? I mistake, it is your bull that has killed one of my oxen."—"Indeed!" said the lawyer, "that alters the case: I must enquire into the affair; and if—"—"And *if!*" said the farmer; "the business I find would have been concluded without an *if*, had you been as ready to do justice to others as to exact it from them."

THE BEES AND THE SILK-WORMS.

One day the bees soared up as high as Olympus, and prostrating themselves at the foot of Jove's awful throne, sued for his protection in return for the care they took of him in his infancy, when they fed him with honey upon Mount Ida. Jove was pleased to grant them the precedence of all other insects. Minerva, who presides over the liberal arts, represented to him that there was another species, that would dispute the glory of profitable inventions with the bees. Jupiter desired to know their name. "The silk-worms," replied she. Thereupon the father of the gods gave orders to Mercury to bring the deputies of that little state before him, on the wings of the gentle Zephyrs, that he might hear the pleading on both sides.

The ambassadress from the republic of the bees opened the cause; harangued on the sweetness of their honey, which is the nectar of mankind, its usefulness, and the art with which it is composed; she then expatiated on the wisdom of their laws, and the polity of their republic. "No other winged creatures whatsoever," continued the orator, "can boast of the like honour, and it was a recompense for our having succoured in a cave the father of the gods. Moreover, we are brave in war, and give undeniable testimonies of it whenever our queen summons us to the field of battle. With what assurance can these silk-worms, these vile contemptible insects, dispute the point of honour with us? They can only crawl, whilst we can take a glorious flight and soar on golden wings up to the stars."

The advocate for the silk-worms replied: "We are, it is true, but little insects; neither do we pretend to have such martial courage, or such wise laws as our antagonists; but then, each individual member of our state is a miracle of nature, and consumes his very vitals for the public good. Without laws, we live in peace; no civil wars infest our nation, to which the bees, on every revolution, are for ever subject. We can, like Proteus, shift our forms. Though we are but little, we have eleven curious ringlets that are intermixed with all the variety of lively colours which strike the eye in the most beautiful flowers. Moreover, we spin that silk which contributes to clothe the richest monarchs; nay more, to deck the temples of the gods. Our manufacture, which is so fine and lasting, is much more valuable than their honey, which is so subject to decay. To conclude, we transform ourselves into beans, such as have a grateful savour, as have always motion, and some signs of life. After these wondrous transformations, we become butterflies at once, whose wings are painted with the gayest colours. Then are our forms in no respect inferior to the bees; then can we take as bold a flight towards Heaven as they Now, O father of the gods, having heard the arguments on both sides, be thou our judge."

Jupiter, though at a loss to decide the controversy, declared at last that the bees should retain their ancient privilege, as they could plead their title to it from time immemorial: "How is it possible for me," said he, "to degrade them? No, I am too highly indebted to them for their former services to put any indignity upon them now. But yet it is my opinion, that mankind has greater obligations to the silk-worms than to the bees."

THE MIMIC AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

MEN often judge wrong from some foolish prejudice; and whilst they persist in the defence of their mistakes, are sometimes brought to shame by incontestible evidence.

A certain wealthy patrician, intending to treat the Roman people with some theatrical entertainments, published a reward to any one who could furnish out a new or uncommon diversion. Excited by emulation, the artists assembled from all parts; among whom, a mimic, well known for his arch wit, gave out that he had a kind of entertainment that had never yet been produced upon any stage.

This report being spread about, brought the whole city together. The theatre could hardly contain the number of spectators. And when the artist appeared alone upon the stage, without any apparatus, without any prompter or assistant, curiosity and suspense kept the spectators in profound silence.

On a sudden, the performer thrust down his head into his bosom, and mimicked the squeaking of a young pig so naturally, that the audience insisted upon it he had one under his cloak, and ordered him to be searched; which being done, and nothing appearing, they loaded the man with encomiums, and honoured him with the most extravagant applause.

A country fellow, observing what passed: "Faith," said he, "I can do this better than he:" and immediately gave out that he would perform the same much better the next day. Accordingly, greater crowds assembled: prepossessed, however, in favour of the first artist, they sat prepared to laugh at the clown, rather than to judge fairly of his performance.

They both came out upon the stage. The mimic grunted away first, was received with vast applause and the loudest acclamations. Then the countryman, pretending that he concealed a little pig under his clothes, which in fact he did, pinched the ear of the animal, till he made him squeak. The people exclaimed aloud that the first performer had imitated the pig much more naturally, and would have hissed the countryman off the stage: but he produced the real pig from his bosom, and convincing them by a visible proof of their ridiculous error: "See, gentlemen," said he, "*what pretty sort of judges you are!*"

THE CRICKET AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

"I ASSURE you," said the cricket to the nightingale, "that my singing does not lack admirers."—"Pray name them," said the nightingale. "The industrious reapers," replied the cricket, "are very fond of listening to me: and you cannot deny that they form the most useful body of men in the whole community!"—"In the latter remark I agree with you," said the nightingale; "but you must nevertheless not pride yourself upon their opinion. Honest people, whose thoughts are occupied solely by their daily labour, cannot be possessed of very keen perception. Think nothing of your singing, therefore, until the careless shepherd, who himself plays so sweetly on his flute, listens to you with silent rapture."

THE CROW AND THE PITCHER.

A CROW, ready to die with thirst, flew with joy to a pitcher, which he beheld at some distance. When he came, he found water in it, indeed, but so near the bottom, that with all his stooping and straining, he was not able to reach it: he then endeavoured to overturn the pitcher, that at last he might be able to get a little of it; but his strength was not sufficient for this. At last, seeing some pebbles lie near the place, he cast them one by one into the pitcher; and thus, by degrees, raised the water up to the brim, and satisfied his thirst.

Many things which cannot be effected by strength, or by vulgar enterprise, may yet be brought about by some new and untried means. A man of sagacity and penetration upon encountering a difficulty or two, does not immediately despair: but if he cannot succeed one way, employs his wit and ingenuity another; and, to avoid or get over an impediment, makes no scruple of stepping out of the paths of his forefathers. Since our happiness, next to the regulation of our minds, depends altogether upon our having and enjoying the conveniences of life, why should we stand upon ceremony about the methods of obtaining them, or pay any deference to antiquity upon that score? If almost every age had not exerted itself in some improvements of its own, we should want a thousand arts, or at least many degrees of perfection in every art, which at present we are in possesion of. The invention of anything which is more commodious for the mind or body than what they had before, ought to be embraced readily, and the projector of it distinguished with suitable encouragement. Such as the use of the compass, for example, from which mankind reaps so much benefit and advantage, and which was not known to former ages. When we follow the steps of those who have gone before us in the old beaten track of life, how do we differ from horses in a team, which are linked to each other by a chain or harness, and move on in a dull, heavy pace, to the tune of their leader's bells? But the man who enriches the present fund of knowledge with some new invention or useful improvement, like a happy adventurer at sea, discovers, as it were, an unknown land, and imports an additional trade into his own country.

THE SICK KITE.

A KITE had been sick a long time, and finding there was no hopes of recovery, begged of his mother to go to all the churches and religious houses in the country, to try what prayers and promises would effect in his behalf. The old kite replied: "Indeed, dear son, I would willingly undertake anything to save your life, but I have great reason to despair of doing you any service in the way you propose: for with what face can I ask anything of the gods, in favour of one whose whole life has been a continual scene of rapine and injustice, and who has not scrupled, upon occasion, to rob the very altars themselves?"

This Fable almost unavoidably draws the attention to that very serious and important point, the consideration of a death-bed repentance: and to expose the absurdity of relying upon such a weak foundation, we need only ask the same question with the kite in the Fable: how can he that has offended the gods all his life-time, by doing acts of dishonour and injustice, expect that they should be pleased with him at last, for no other reason but because he fears he shall not be able to offend them any longer, when, in truth, such a repentance can signify nothing but a confirmation of his former impudence and folly, for surely no stupidity can exceed that of the man who expects a future judgment, and yet can bear to commit any piece of injustice, with a sense and deliberate knowledge of the fact.



THE WOLF AND THE DOG.

THE CAT AND THE TWO SPARROWS.

A cat lived in the greatest friendship with a young sparrow, and no wonder, since they were of the same age, and had from their birth occupied the same apartment. The bird often provoked his companion by pecking her with his beak, which she returned only by fondling him with her paws. The cat always spared her friend, never chastising him save in jest; and even then, she was very scrupulous not to make use of her talons. The sparrow, less circumspect, dealt heavy blows with his beak; but Puss, like a sage and discreet individual, made allowances for these familiarities; for one should never seriously give way to anger among friends. As they had been intimate from their earliest youth, the force of habit maintained peace between them, and their frolics never had an angry ending. At length a sparrow, residing in their immediate vicinity, came to visit them, and was soon the inseparable companion of petulant Dick and of sage Puss. The two birds shortly fell out, and Puss took part in the quarrel. "This stranger!" she exclaimed, "is behaving mighty prettily, to insult my friend. Is the sparrow of another, to be the death of our's? No! by all that is feline!" and joining in the combat, she seized and devoured the intruder. "Really!" exclaimed miss Puss, "there is a most exquisite and delicate flavour about these sparrows!" This profound reflection occurred to her often afterwards, till, no longer able to restrain her appetite, she fell upon and made a meal of her friend.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A lion, faint with heat and weary with hunting, lay down to take his repose under the spreading boughs of a shady oak. It happened that, while he slept, a company of scrambling mice ran over his back and waked him. Upon which, starting up, he clapped his paw upon one of them, and was just going to put it to death, when the little supplicant implored his mercy in a very moving manner, begging him not to stain his noble character with the blood of so despicable and small a beast. The lion, considering the matter, thought proper to do as he was desired, and immediately released his little trembling prisoner. Not long after, traversing the forest in pursuit of his prey, he ran into the toils of the hunters; when, not being able to disengage himself, he set up a hideous and loud roar. The mouse, hearing the voice and knowing it to be the lion's, immediately repaired to the place, and bade him fear nothing, for that he was his friend; then straightway fell to work, and with his little sharp teeth, gnawing asunder the knots and fastenings of the toils, set the royal brute at liberty.

This Fable impresses upon us that there is no person in the world so little, but even the greatest may, some time or other, stand in need of his assistance; and consequently, that it is good to use clemency where there is room for it, towards those who fall within our power. A generosity of this kind looks very graceful whenever it is exerted, if there were nothing else in it: but as the lowest people in life may, upon occasion, have it in their power either to serve or hurt us, it becomes our duty, in point of common interest, to behave with good nature and lenity towards all with whom we have to do.

THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

The lion mentioned in the preceding Fable, touched with the grateful procedure of the mouse, and resolving not to be outdone in generosity by any wild beast whatsoever, desired his little deliverer to name his own terms, as he might depend upon his complying with any proposal he should make. The mouse, fired with ambition at this gracious offer, did not so much consider what was proper for him to ask, as what was in the power of his prince to grant, and so presumptuously demanded his daughter, the young lioness, in marriage. The lion consented; but when he would have given the royal virgin into his possession, she, like a giddy thing as she was, not minding how she walked, by chance set her paw upon her bridegroom, who was coming to meet her, and crushed him to pieces.

The want or possession of a good judgment, often makes the prince a poor wretch, and the poor philosopher completely easy. The first and chief degree of judgment is to know one's self; to be able to make a tolerable estimate of one's own capacity, so as not to speak or undertake anything which may either injure or make us ridiculous.

THE TUBEROSE AND THE SUN-FLOWER.

A tuberose in a bow-window, on the north side of a stately villa, addressed a sun-flower which grew on a slope that was contiguous to the house. "Pray neighbour," said he, "to what purpose do you pay all this devotion to that fictitious deity of yours, the sun? Why are you still distorting your body, and casting up your eyes to that glaring luminary? What superstition induces you to think that we flowers exist only through his influence? Both you and I are surely indebted to the hot-bed, and to the diligence of the gardener, for our production and support. For my part, I shall reserve my homage, together with my sweets, for that benevolent master who is continually watering and refreshing me: nor do I desire ever to see the face of that sun you so vainly idolize, while I can enjoy the cool shade of this magnificent saloon."—"Truce with thy blasphemies," replied the sun-flower; "why dost thou revile that glorious being who dispenses life and vigour, not only to us, but to every part of the creation? Without this, alas! how ineffectual were the skill and vigilance of thy boasted master, either to support thy tender frame, or even to preserve his own! But this must ever be the case with such contracted understandings; sufficient, indeed, to point out our more immediate benefactors, but disregarding the original source from which all beneficence proceeds."

HERCULES AND THE CARTER.

As a clownish fellow was driving his cart along a deep miry lane, the wheel stuck so fast in the clay that the horses could not draw them out. Upon this he prayed hastily to Hercules to come and help him. Hercules, looking down from a cloud, bid him not lie there like an idle rascal as he was, but get up and whip his horses stoutly, and clap his shoulder to the wheel; adding, that this was the only way for him to obtain his assistance.

THE MILLER, HIS SON, AND THE ASS.

At Athens, when a busy fair
Attracted half the country there,
An honest miller, like the rest,
With rage of gadding was possest;
Besides, he wished to turn a penny,
Having of donkies one too many.
He and his son, a hopeful lad,
In weeds of holiday were clad,
As then the Attic peasants wore 'em;
They gently drove their ass before 'em;
And social chatting, side by side,
They walked, for neither chose to ride.
Between the town and their abode,
Some damsels passed them on the road.
Greeks of each sex, a prating tribe,
On all occasions lov'd to gibe.
"Look there!" exclaimed the tittering lasses,
"D'ye see that trio rare of asses?
Friends, do you like, in all this heat,
To use those hoofs you call your feet,
When both, or surely one at least,
Might ride that sturdy, long-eared beast!"
Vex'd that the girls an ass should count him,
The man now bade his youngster mount him.
When scarce a mile was gone, they met
Of codgers grave a solemn set,
This new position moves their bile;
Thus they the passive youth revile:
"Is't not enough to rouse one's rage,
To see no honour paid to age!
Can yon stout lad that beast bestride,
Nor let his ancient father ride?
Must grey-beards walk?—Unfeeling clown,
For shame, you graceless boy, get down!"
Displeas'd such causeless blame to meet,
The senior takes the young man's seat.
But other tongues proclaim, ere long,
Our good man's plans, as usual, wrong.
"See how on foot that stripling trudges,
This churl the least indulgence grudges.
Expire with toil he'd see him rather—
He cannot be the poor child's father!"
"'Tis hard to please the world, I find,"
The father cries, "boy, mount behind."

Ned under double pressure straining,
In his harsh lingo vents his 'plaining,
Whilst more attendants on the fair,
Gaze at the ass and luckless pair,
And utter warm disapprobation,
In still more loud vociferation :
"Does it not much," cries one, "amaze ye,
To see two heavy louts so lazy!
Never, since first I us'd this road, did
I see poor beast so sadly loaded!
To carry him they're much more able,
Such cruelty is lamentable!"
"Well," said the man, "my son and I
To please will this last method try."
The tender critic's aid he begs,
To tie the pitied donkey's legs;
Then by a pole across their shoulders,
Ned rides, diverting all beholders!
They reached the bridge :—now shouts and cries
Around them thick and threefold rise;
Such hootings loud, and peals of laughter,
Precede the group, and follow after.
No one the gathering crowd can pass,
Nor further move the carried ass.
As still the merry rabble press on,
The miller cries, "I've gained a lesson;
A mob may prove a useful tutor:
From my own brains I'll act in future.
Learn then, my son, in this rough school,
Who would please all men is a fool—
A fool alone such efforts tries,
O Folly! take this sacrifice,
For here with me thy reign shall close!"
Then o'er the bridge the ass he throws,
And, deaf to every pert adviser,
Goes home, tho' poorer, somewhat wiser.

This tale suits men in every station,
Who work a mill, or rule a nation.
If with the stream for ever swimming,
You strive to gain all hearts by trimming,
When all your fruitless labour's done,
You'll scarcely win the praise of one.

THE TREES AND THE BRAMBLE.

The Israelites, ever murmuring and discontented under the reign of Jehovah, were desirous of having a king, like the rest of the nations. They offered the kingdom to Gideon, their deliverer—to him and to his posterity after him. He generously refused their offer, and reminded them that Jehovah was their king. When Gideon was dead, Abimelech, his son by a concubine, slew all his brothers to the number of seventy, Jotham alone escaping, who, by the assistance of the Shechemites, made himself king. Jotham, to represent to them their folly, and to shew them that the most deserving are generally the least ambitious, whereas the worthless grasp at power with eagerness and exercise it with insolence and tyranny, spake to them in the following manner: "Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, so may God hearken unto you! The trees, grown weary of the state of freedom and equality in which God had placed them, met together to choose and anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive-tree, 'Reign thou over us.' But the olive-tree said unto them, 'Shall I quit my fatness, wherewith God and man is honoured, to disquiet myself with the cares of government and to rule over the trees?' And they said unto the fig-tree, 'Come thou and reign over us.' But the fig-tree said unto them, 'Shall I bid adieu to my sweetness and my pleasant fruit, to take upon me the painful charge of royalty and to be set over the trees?' Then said the trees unto the vine, 'Come thou and reign over us.' But the vine said also unto them, 'Shall I leave my wine, which honoureth God and cheereth man, to bring upon myself nothing but trouble and anxiety, and to become king of the trees? We are happy in our present lot; seek some other to reign over you.' Then said all the trees unto the bramble, 'Come thou and reign over us.' And the bramble said unto them, 'I will be your king; come ye all under my shadow and be safe; obey me and I will grant you my protection. But if ye obey me not, out of the bramble shall come forth a fire, which shall devour even the cedars of Lebanon.'"

THE GOAT AND THE LION.

A lion seeing a goat upon a steep craggy rock, where he could not come at him, asked him what delight he could take to skip from one precipice to another all day, and constantly venture the breaking of his neck! "I wonder," said he, "you do not come down and feed on the plain here, where there is plenty of good grass and fine sweet herbs."—"Why," replied the goat, "I cannot but say your opinion is right; but you look so very hungry and designing that, to tell you the truth, I do not care to venture my person where you are."

Advice, though good in itself, is to be suspected when it is given by a tricking, self-interested person. Perhaps we should take very great and unnecessary trouble, if we were to suspect every man who may advise us. This, however, is necessary, that when we have reason to question any one, in point of honour and justice, we should not only consider well, before we suffer ourselves to be persuaded by him, but even resolve to have anything to do in an affair where known treacherous parties are concerned.

THE BEGGAR AND HIS DOG.

A BEGGAR and his dog sat at the gate of a noble courtier, and were preparing to make a meal on a bowl of fragments from the kitchen-maid. A poor dependant of his lordship's, who had been sharing the singular favour of a dinner at the steward's table, was struck with the appearance, and stopped a little to observe them. The beggar, hungry and voracious as any courtier in Christendom, seized with greediness the choicest morsels and swallowed them himself: the residue was divided into portions for his children. A scrag was thurst into one pocket for honest Jack, a crust into another for bashful Tom, and a luncheon of cheese was wrapt up with care for the little favourite of his hopeful family. In short, if anything was thrown to the dog, it was a bone, so closely picked that it scarce afforded a pittance to keep life and soul together. "How exactly alike," said the dependant, "is this poor dog's case and mine! He is watching for a dinner from a master who cannot spare it; I for a place from a needy lord, whose wants perhaps are greater than my own, and whose relations are more clamorous than any of this beggar's brats. Shrewdly was it said by an ingenious writer, *a courtier's dependant is a beggar's dog.*"

THE FOX AND THE SWALLOW.

ARISTOTLE informs us that the following Fable was spoken by Æsop to the Samians on a debate upon changing their ministers, who were accused of plundering the commonwealth.

A fox, swimming across a river, happened to be entangled in some weeds that grew near the bank, from which he was unable to extricate himself. As he lay thus exposed to the whole swarms of flies, who were galling him and sucking his blood, a swallow, observing his distress, kindly offered to drive them away. "By no means," said the fox, "for if these should be chased away, who are already sufficiently gorged, another more hungry swarm would succeed, and I should be robbed of every remaining drop of blood in my veins."

THE TWO FROGS.

ONE sultry summer, the lakes and ponds being almost everywhere dried up, a couple of frogs agreed to travel together in search of water. At last they came to a deep well, and sitting upon the brink of it, began to consult whether they should leap in or not. One of them was for doing so, urging that there was plenty of clear spring water, and no danger of being disturbed. "Well," said the other, "all this may be true, and yet I cannot come into your opinion for my life; for if the water should happen to dry up here too, how should we get out again?"

The moral of this Fable is clearly to put us in mind that we should look before we leap, and not undertake any action of importance, without considering first what the event of it is like to prove, and how we shall be able to come off upon such and such provisos. A good general does not think it derogatory to his character to look forward beyond the main action, and concert measures for a safe retreat, in case there should be occasion.

THE WANTON CALF.

A CALF, full of play and wantonness, seeing an ox at plough, could not forbear insulting him: "What a sorry poor drudge art thou," said he, "to bear that heavy yoke upon your neck, and go all day drawing a plough at your tail to turn up the ground for your master. But you are a wretched dull slave, and know no better, or you would not do it. See what a happy life I lead; I go just where I please; sometimes I lie down in the cool shade: sometimes I frisk about in the open sunshine, and, when I please, slake my thirst in the clear, sweet brook: but you, if you were to perish, have not so much as a little dirty water to refresh you." The ox, not at all moved at what he had said, went quietly and calmly on with his work, and in the evening was unyoked and turned loose. Soon after which he saw the calf taken out of the field, and delivered into the hands of a priest, who immediately led him to the altar, and prepared to sacrifice him. His head was hung round with fillets of flowers, and the fatal knife was just going to be applied to his throat, when the ox drew near and whispered him to this purpose: "Behold the end of your insolence and arrogance; it was for this only you were suffered to live at all; and pray now, friend, whose condition is best, yours or mine?"

Nobody, but a person of a cruel, indiscreet temper, would insult people in distress; for, as the proceedings of Fortune are very irregular and uncertain, we may, the next turn of the wheel, be thrown down to their condition, and they exalted to ours. We are likewise given to understand by this Fable what the consequence of an idle life generally is, and, how well satisfied, laborious, diligent men are in the end, when they come quietly to enjoy the fruits of their industry; while on the contrary, they who, by little tricks and sharping, or by open violence and robbery, live in an expensive way, often, in their hearts at least, despise the poor, honest man, who is contented with the virtuous produce of his labour, and patiently submits to his condition. But how often is the poor man comforted by seeing villany led in triumph to the altar of justice, while he has many a cheerful summer's morning to enjoy abroad, and many a long winter's evening to indulge himself in at home, by a quiet hearth and under an unenvied roof, blessings which often attend a sober, industrious man, though the idle and profligate are utter strangers to them.

THE SORCERESS.

NIGHT and silence had now given repose to the world, when an old, ill-natured sorceress, in order to exercise her infernal arts, entered into a gloomy wood, which trembled at her approach. The scene of her horrid incantations was within the circumference of a large circle, in the centre of which an altar was raised, where the hallowed vervain blazed in triangular flames, while the mischievous hag pronounced the dreadful words, which bound all hell in obedience to her charms. She blew a raging pestilence from her lips into the neighbouring folds; the innocent cattle died to afford a fit sacrifice to the infernal deities. The moon, by powerful spells drawn from her orb, entered the wood, and legions of spirits from Pluto's realms appeared before the altar, to demand her pleasure. "Tell me," said she, "where I shall find what I have lost, my favourite little dog."—"How!" cried they all, enraged; "impertinent beldame! Must the order of Nature be inverted, and the repose of every creature be disturbed, for the sake of thy little dog?"

THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

In the depth of winter, a poor ass prayed heartily for the spring, that he might exchange a cold lodging and a heartless truss of straw, for a little warm weather and a mouthful of fresh grass. In a short time, according to his wish, the warm weather and fresh grass came on: but brought with them so much toil and business, that he was soon as weary of the spring as before of the winter; and he now became impatient for the approach of summer. Summer arrived: but the heat, the harvest work, and other drudgeries and inconveniences of the season, set him as far from happiness as before; which he now flattered himself would be found in the plenty of autumn. But here too he was disappointed; for what with the carrying of apples, roots, fuel for the winter, and other provisions, he was in autumn more fatigued than ever. Having thus trod round the circle of the year, in a course of restless labour, uneasiness and disappointment; and found no season, nor station of life, without its business and its trouble; he was forced at last to acquiesce in the comfortless season of winter, where his complaint began; convinced that in this world every situation has its inconvenience.

THE BOASTING TRAVELLER.

One who had been abroad, at his return home, was giving an account of his travels, and said that, among other places, he had been at Rhodes, where he had so distinguished himself in leaping, an exercise that city was famous for, that not a Rhodian could come near him. Those who were present, however, did not seem to credit this relation so readily as he intended they should; and he therefore took some pains to convince them of it by oaths and protestations; upon which, one of the company rose and told him he need not give himself so much trouble about it, since he would put him in a way to demonstrate the fact; which was, to suppose the place they were in to be Rhodes, and to perform this extraordinary leap over again. The boaster, not liking this proposal, sat down quietly, and had no more to say for himself.

THE LEOPARD AND THE FOX.

A leopard, one day, took it into his head to value himself upon the great variety and beauty of his spots, and asserted that he saw no reason why even the lion should take place of him, since he could not shew so beautiful a skin. As for the rest of the wild beasts of the forests, he treated them all, without distinction, in the most haughty and disdainful manner. But the fox being among them, went up to him with a great deal of spirit and resolution, and told him that he was mistaken in the value he was pleased to set upon himself, since people of judgment were not used to form their opinion of merit from an outside appearance, but by considering the good qualities and endowments with which the mind was stored within.



THE TWO GOATS.

THE TWO GOATS.

A CERTAIN love of freedom characterizes the goat, which leads her, as soon as she has finished browsing, to seek her fortune; for that purpose she travels to distant pastures, remote from the habitations of man. To such a spot, with neither road nor path leading to it, but overhung with rugged precipices, do these bearded gentry repair to exhibit their caprice. No obstruction nor difficulty can debar the clambering animals from their favourite haunts.—But to the point.

Two goats, both of the feminine gender, quitting a glen from different sides, by some unlucky chance came to meet. A mountain torrent alone lay between them, the sole bridge over which was a frail plank, so narrow that two weasels could scarcely have passed abreast; and the rapid, roaring current, and the depth of water beneath, was sufficient to have made more fiery amazons tremble. In spite, however, of so many dangers, one of the fair ones set her hoof upon the plank, and the other was not slow to follow her example. Each advanced towards the other, step for step, until both she-adventurers, who were equally arrogant, had gained the centre of the bridge, where it was impossible for them to pass, and neither would yield to the other by retreating. Each had the honour, so, at least, say the authorities of the Herald's College of Goatland, of having for ancestors the most illustrious personages of ancient times. The one claimed to be descended from a goat of incomparable merit, presented by Polyphemus to Galatea, long before the wars of Troy; and the other traced her geneaology, in a direct line, from Amalthea, celebrated as the foster-mother, or at least the wet-nurse, of Olympian Jove. Supported by such mighty pretensions, it would have compromised the dignity of either to retreat, so each endeavoured to assume a becoming attitude to argue the matter; when, as they shifted their position, the plank sprung, and both, losing their balance, were instantly immersed in the boiling torrent beneath.

Ladies of high birth and antique extraction, English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish, ponder well upon this Fable; lest, when you come to claim precedence in an *entrée*, you find yourselves in the predicament of the two goats, and, instead of having your pretensions admitted, you be utterly excluded from the society you seek. for your assumption and arrogance.

THE GOOSE.

THE feathers of a goose put the newly-fallen snow to the blush. Proud of this dazzling gift of Nature, she considered herself intended for a swan, rather than for that which she was. Accordingly, separating herself from her companions, she swam, solitary and majestically, round the pond. She now stretched her neck, the treacherous shortness of which she endeavoured to obviate with all her might. Now she tried to give it the graceful bend, which designates the beautiful swan, the bird of Apollo. But in vain, it was too stiff, and, with all her pains, she remained a ridiculous goose, without inspiring a single beholder with the least idea of her resemblance to a swan.

How many geese are there, without wings, who, for similar assumption, become laughing-stocks to their neighbours!

THE TWO YOUNG LIONS.

Two young lions had been brought up together in one forest. Their age, stature, and strength were equal. One was taken in the royal toils, by the huntsmen belonging to the Caliph; the other still remained free amongst the craggy mountains. The young captive was carried to court, where he lived in luxury and ease. Every day he had an antelope for dinner, and, when he desired to rest, there was a soft bed for him to sleep on. A white eunuch attended him twice a day to comb his long golden mane. As he was very tame, the king himself would often stroke him. He grew plump and smooth, had a comely aspect, and was magnificently drest; for he wore a golden collar, and, in his ears, pendants, adorned with pearls and jewels. He despised the other lions who were kept in dens contiguous to his, but not so handsomely furnished, and who were not such favourites as himself. His prosperity, indeed, made him vain and haughty, and he imagined himself to be a person of exalted merit, since he met with such civil treatment and so much respect. The court in which he shone gave him a taste for ambition; he flattered himself that, had he resided in the forests, he would have been some mighty hero.

One day, as he was no longer chained, he ran away from court and returned to his native country. At the same juncture the king of the lions died, and the states all assembled in order to elect a successor. Amongst the numerous candidates, there appeared one that, in stateliness and courage, far excelled the rest, and was, in fact, the other lion, mentioned at the beginning of this history, who had never been absent from the forest. Whilst the one had made his fortune at court, the other had often been forced to exert his courage to satisfy his hunger; he was accustomed to get his daily food through the utmost perils and fatigues; he made the very shepherds themselves, as well as their flocks, his frequent prey. He was lean, shaggy and frightful; his eyes were blood-shot and, as it were, on fire. He was active, nervous, could climb trees and spring upon his prey, fearless of darts or javelins.

The two old companions proposed to the assembly to decide their pretensions to the crown by single combat; but an old, wise and experienced lioness, to whose judgment the whole republic paid the utmost deference, advised them, without more ado, to elect him who had studied politics at court. Several were highly disgusted at this motion, saying that she would have them prefer a self-conceited, licentious prince, before a warrior who had distinguished himself by superior toils, who was inured to dangers and qualified for the most heroic adventures. The authority of the old lioness, however, prevailed, and the courtier was established on the throne.

At first he indulged himself in all manner of pleasures, delighting in nothing but pomp and ostentation: he made use of hypocrisy and artifice to conceal the cruelty of his temper and his love of arbitrary power. His conduct, however, soon made him hated, despised, detested. Then the old lioness said: "It is high time now to dethrone him. I knew very well that he was unworthy of being your sovereign; but I was willing you should have one that had been spoiled by luxury and politics, that you might learn the better how to value another, who, by

his courage and patience, had deserved to rule over you. Now let the two combatants enter the lists."

Immediately, the two champions were conducted to an enclosed field, and the august assembly stood at a distance to see the martial show; but the spectacle was but of short duration. The courtier trembled and dared not look the other in the face: he shamefully took to his heels, and strove to hide himself. The forester pursued and upbraided him. All the spectators cried out: "Kill him, tear him to pieces?"—"No, no," replied his antagonist, "when an enemy is such a coward as he, it were cowardice to be afraid of him. I shall give him his life: he does not deserve death from my hands. I shall know how to reign, without giving myself any trouble in keeping him in subjection." To conclude, the undaunted lion ruled with authority and prudence. The other was well satisfied to make his servile court to him, for the purpose of procuring a trivial favour now and then, and spent the remainder of his days in shameful indolence and ease.

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A SOLEMN, formal owl had many years made his habitation in a grove, among the ruins of an old monastery, and had pored so often on some mouldy manuscripts, the stupid relics of a monkish library, that he grew infected with the pride and pedantry of the place, and, mistaking gravity for wisdom, would sit whole days with his eyes half shut, fancying himself profoundly learned. It happened, as he sat one evening, half buried in meditation and half asleep, that a nightingale, unluckily perching near him, began her melodious lays. He started from his reverie, and, with a horrid screech interrupting her song, "Begone," cried he, "thou impertinent minstrel, nor distract with noisy dissonance my sublime contemplations. At the same time know, vain songster, that harmony consists in truth alone, which is gained by laborious study; and not in languishing notes, fit only to soothe the ear of a love-sick maid"—"Conceited pedant," returned the nightingale, "whose wisdom lies only in the feathers that muffle thy unmeaning face; music is a natural and rational entertainment, and, though not adapted to the ears of an owl, has ever been relished and admired by all who are possessed of true taste and elegance."

THE SUN AND THE WIND.

PHŒBUS and Æolus had once a dispute which of them could soonest prevail with a certain traveller to part with his cloak. Æolus began the attack with great violence. But the man, wrapping his cloak still closer about him, doubled his efforts to keep it and went on his way. And now, Phœbus darted his warm, insinuating rays, which, melting the traveller by degrees, at length obliged him to throw aside his cloak, that all the rage of Æolus could not compel him to resign. "Learn hence," said Phœbus to the blustering god, "that soft and gentle means will often accomplish what force and fury cannot effect."

THE PEAR-TREE AND THE THORN.

A PEAR-TREE, rich in racy fruit,
Had on the highway fixed its root,
And near it, by a whim of chance,
A thorn, with many a spiky lance.
This path unnumbered travellers chose,
Who caused the pear-tree numerous woes.
Beneath its cooling shade they stopp'd;
Its foliage, free from hinderance, cropp'd,
And formed a soft and verdant seat,
There of its choicest fruits to eat.
The urchin school-boys too, in sport,
With stones would break its tendrils short,
And, with the fruit, some murderous blow
Would oft bring towering branches low:
Then, in the months of snow and hail,
The peasants would its boughs assail,
And hew at once some giant arm,
Th' ungrateful pillagers to warm.
Meanwhile, the stings which Nature gave,
The thorn from all aggression save;
None dare approach her bristly side;
From thence dame thorn, with chuckling pride,
Her own vindictive talent vaunts;
And, while the passive pear she taunts,
Concludes it safer to be feared,
Than be for usefulness revered.
Do climes exist where such a creed,
Such arguments, can converts breed?
What credit to its truth is due,
The sequel offers now to view.
A traveller once, whose hand the thorn
Had, with its prickles, rudely torn,
In wrath exclaim'd: "Accursed fry!
Unpitied thou and thine shall die.
So perish all who ape thy spite!"—
Then felled it with his sword outright.

Mortals! if you desire to know
What temper's best, the tale will shew.
The good, perhaps, are oft annoyed;
But the malicious are destroyed.



THE ASTROLOGER.

THE ASTROLOGER.

One evening, while star gazing, an astrologer fell into a well: "Poor wretch," said they who saw him emerge from his involuntary bath, "how can he pretend to read what is written in the book of destiny above, when he cannot divine what is at his feet?"

This accident, in itself, ought to be a sufficient lesson to mankind against charlatans, who assert their possession of the means of Revelation. If chance were a science, it would no longer be chance or fortune; but all its pretensions would be capable of demonstration, and the will and power of the Supreme would be annihilated. He who made all things, and nothing without design, has wisely concealed the future with an impenetrable veil; and the good sense of mankind has taught them, that it were the most extravagant folly to attempt to ward off what the Divine has declared to be inevitable. And what advantage could we reap were it otherwise? In the midst of present delights; we should be miserable at the prospect of future evils, and our disgust, under pain and misfortune, would make us haters of ourselves and of our kind. It is an error, a crime, to believe that God registers publicly in the face of the skies what has only been occasionally revealed, for special purposes, and but partially, to his chosen prophets, merely to exercise the genius of a few dunces who have been taught to construct an artificial globe, and to give fantastic names to the stars. The purposes, motives, will, and power of the Infinite are beyond the comprehension of quacks and decipherers of horoscopes; and all we can say with safety of the celestial influence is that the sun lights us every day, produces the seasons, and perfects the work of the husbandman, and that the moon and the stars give us their brilliance by night and stud the heavens with beauty and glory.

But to return to the history of the speculator, who drank more water than he intended. Besides the vanity which prompted his lying art, he resembles those who stake their existence upon chimeras, although neither themselves nor their affairs are ever out of danger.

THE HERMIT AND THE BEAR.

An imprudent friend often does as much mischief by his too great zeal, as the worst enemy could effect by his malice.

A certain hermit having done a good office to a bear, the grateful creature was so sensible of his obligation, that he begged to be admitted as the guardian and companion of his solitude. The hermit willingly accepted his offer and conducted him to his cell, where they passed their time together in an amicable manner. One very hot day, the hermit having laid him down to sleep, the officious bear employed himself in driving away the flies from his patron's face. But, in spite of all his care, one of the flies perpetually returned to the attack, and at last settled on the hermit's nose. "Now I shall have you, most certainly," said the bear; and, with the best intentions imaginable, gave him a violent blow on the face, which very effectually indeed demolished the fly, but at the same time most terribly bruised the face of his benefactor.

ECHO AND THE OWL.

The vain hear the flatteries of their own imagination, and fancy them to be the voice of fame.

A solemn owl, puffed up with vanity, sat repeating her screams at midnight from the hollow of a blasted oak. "And whence," cried she "proceeds this awful silence, unless it be to favour my superior melody? Surely the groves are hushed in expectation of my voice, and, when I sing all Nature listens." An echo, resounding from an adjacent rock, replied immediately: "All Nature listens."—"The nightingale," resumed she, "has usurped the sovereignty of night: her note indeed is musical, but mine is sweeter far. The voice, confirming her opinion, replied again, "Is sweeter far."—"Why then am I diffident," continued she, "why do I fear to join the tuneful choir?" The echo, still flattering her vanity, repeated: "Join the tuneful choir." Roused by this empty phantom of encouragement, she, on the morrow, mingled her hootings with the harmony of the groves. But the tuneful songsters, disgusted with her noise, and affronted by her impudence, unanimously drove her from their society, and still continue to pursue her whenever she appears.

THE TWO SPRINGS.

Two springs which issued from the same fountain, began their course together; one of them took her way in a silent and gentle stream, while the other rushed along with a sounding and rapid current. "Sister," said the latter, "at the rate you move you will probably be dried up before you advance much further; whereas, I will venture a wager, that, within two or three hundred furlongs, I shall become navigable, and, after distributing commerce and wealth, wherever I flow, shall majestically proceed to pay my tribute to the ocean; so farewell, dear sister, and patiently submit to your fate." Her sister made no reply; but calmly descending to the meadows below, increased her stream by numberless little rills which she collected in her progress, till at length she was enabled to rise into a considerable river; whilst the proud stream, which had the vanity to depend solely upon her own sufficiency, continued a shallow brook, and was glad at last to be helped forward by throwing herself into the arms of her despised sister.

THE PEACOCK AND THE CRANE.

A peacock and crane by chance met together in the same place: the peacock erecting his tail, displayed his gaudy plumes and looked with contempt upon the crane, as some mean, ordinary person. The crane, resolving to mortify his insolence, took occasion to say that peacocks were very fine birds indeed, if fine feathers could make them so; but that he thought it a much nobler thing to be able to rise above the clouds, than to strut about upon the ground and be gazed at by children.

THE OAK AND THE SWINE.

A gluttonous swine was feeding beneath a lofty oak, upon the fallen fruit. As he ate one acorn, he already devoured another with his eye.

"Ungrateful beast!" at length exclaimed the oak; "thou nourishest thyself from my produce, without bestowing a single thought of gratitude upon the source."

The swine, interrupting his repast for a moment, grunted for answer: "My grateful regards should not be wanting, if I were only assured that thou lettest thy acorns fall on my account."

THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

An ass finding the skin of a lion, put it on, and going into the woods and pastures, threw all the flocks and herds into terrible consternation. At last, meeting his owner, he would have frightened him also; but the good man, seeing his long ears stick out, presently knew him, and with a good cudgel made him sensible that, notwithstanding his being dressed in a lion's skin, he was really no better than an ass.

As all affectation is wrong, and tends to expose and make a man ridiculous, so the more distant he is from the thing which he affects to appear, the stronger will the ridicule be which he excites, and the greater the inconvenices into which he will be likely to run. How strangely absurd is it for a timorous person to procure a military post, in order to keep himself out of danger, and to fancy a red coat the surest protection of cowardice! Yet there have been those who have purchased a commission to avoid being insulted; and have been so silly as to think courage was interwoven with a sash, or tied up in a cockade. It would not be amiss for such gentlemen to consider that it is not in the power of scarlet cloth to alter nature; and that, as it is expected a soldier should shew himself a man of courage and intrepidity upon all proper occasions, they may by this means meet the disgrace they intended to avoid, and appear greater asses than they need have done. However, it is not in point of fortitude only that people are liable to expose themselves, by assuming a character to which they are not equal; but he who puts on a show of learning, of religion, of a superior capacity in any respect, or in short, of any virtue or knowledge to which he has no claim, is, and will always be found to be, "an ass in a lion's skin."

THE PELICAN.

Parents cannot do too much for well-bred children; but when a weak-minded father draws the blood from his heart for a degenerate son, then love becomes madness.

A pious pelican, seeing his young ones languishing, tore open his breast with his sharp beak and revived them with his blood. "I am surprised at your tenderness," said an eagle to him, "and pity your blindness. See how many worthless cuckoos you have hatched with your young ones!"

It was even as he said; the frigid cuckoo had deposited his eggs in the pelican's nest. "Was it wise to purchase the lives of such worthless creatures so dearly?"

THE SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

A SWALLOW, observing a husbandman employed in sowing hemp, called the little birds together, and informed them what the farmer was about. He told them that hemp was the material from which the nets, so fatal to the feathered race, were composed, and advised them unanimously to join in picking it up, in order to prevent the consequences. The birds, either disbelieving his information, or neglecting his advice, gave themselves no trouble about the matter. In a little time the hemp appeared above ground; the friendly swallow again addressed himself to them, told them it was not too late, provided they would immediately set about the work, before the seeds had taken too deep root. But they still rejecting his advice, he forsook their society, repaired for safety to towns and cities, there built his habitation and kept his residence. One day, as he was skimming along the streets, he happened to see a large portion of those very birds imprisoned in a cage, on the shoulders of a bird-catcher. "Unhappy wretches," said he, "you now feel the punishment of your former neglect. But those who having no foresight of their own, despise the wholesome admonition of their friends deserve the mischiefs which their own obstinacy or negligence brings upon them."

THE LION AND THE TIGER.

THE lion and the hare both sleep with their eyes open. While the former was one day reposing thus, before the entrance of his terrible cave, fatigued with the mighty chase, a tiger leaped near him and laughed at the light slumber. "The fearless lion," he exclaimed; "sleeps there with open eyes like the timid hare!"

"Like the timid hare?" roared the lion, springing up, and seizing the mocker by the throat. The tiger weltered in his blood, and the appeased victor again lay down to sleep.

THE COUNTRY MAID AND HER MILK-PAIL.

WHEN men suffer their imagination to amuse them with the prospect of distant and uncertain improvements of their condition: they frequently sustain real losses, by their inattention to those affairs in which they are immediately concerned.

A country maid was walking very deliberately, with a pail of milk upon her head, when she fell into the following train of reflections: "The money for which I shall sell this milk, will enable me to increase my stock of eggs to three hundred. These eggs, allowing for what may prove addled, and what may be destroyed by vermin, will produce at least two hundred and fifty chickens. The chickens will be fit to carry to market about christmas, when poultry always bears a good price; so that by May-day I cannot fail of having money enough to purchase a new gown. Green—let me consider, yes, green becomes my complexion best, and green it shall be. In this dress I will go to the fair, where all the young fellows will strive to have me for a partner; but I shall perhaps refuse every one of them." Transported with the triumphant thought, she could not forbear acting with her head what thus passed in her imagination, when down came the pail of milk, and with it all her imaginary happiness.



THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

A GRASSHOPPER, whose sprightly song
Had lasted all the summer long,
At length, when wintry gales assail her,
Perceiv'd her old resources fail her.
No tiny worm or slender fly
Can now her ready food supply.
Of neighbour ant, in querulous strain,
She begs a little loan of grain:
And, whilst her suit she thus preferred
Engaged an insect's honest word,
She would next Lammas, to the day,
Both principal and interest pay.
The prudent, cautious ant, 'tis said,
Holds borrowing in a sort of dread;
And (from this charge we'll not defend her)
Abhors the very name of lender.
With importunity grown weary,
She checks it with this single query
"Pray, neighbour, how d'ye spend your summer?"—
"I charm, an't please you, every conner;
All thro' the season every day
I sing the merry hours away."
"Oh;" cries the ant, and bars the door
Which safely guards her winter's store,—
"I'm glad such sports your means allow;
You'd better practise dancing now!"

FORTUNE AND THE BOY.

A BOY was sleeping by the side of a well; Fortune saw him, and came and waked him, saying; "Prithee, good child, do not lie sleeping here; if you should fall in, nobody would impute it to you, but lay all the blame upon me—Fortune.

Poor Fortune has a great deal thrown upon her, indeed, and oftentimes unjustly too. Those of our actions which are attended with success, though often owing to some accident or other, we ascribe, without any scruple, to some particular merit or good quality in ourselves! but when any of our doings miscarry, though probably through our own insufficiency or neglect, all the ill consequences are imputed to Fortune; and we acquit ourselves of having contributed anything towards it. The silliest part of each sex, when they dispose of themselves indiscreetly or disadvantageously in marriage, and having nothing else to say in excuse, cry out: "O there is fate in everything, and there is no resisting fate." But these people should take notice, that, as they have a very good proverb on their side, in relation to Fortune already, it is highly unreasonable in them to claim more than their share, and to ascribe the ill success of their own foolish negociations to the management of Fortune.

THE KING ALPHONSO.

ALPHONSO, who reigned over the shores of the Tagus, and who was surnamed "The wise," not because he was prudent but because he was learned, was especially celebrated as an astronomer. He was better acquainted with the Heavens than with his kingdom, and forsook his council for the sun or the moon. One evening, returning to his observatory surrounded by his courtiers, he said: "My friends, at last I have reason to hope that, with my new instruments I shall to-night see men in the moon."—"Your majesty will doubtless behold them," they answered, "and is likely to witness objects still more extraordinary and more worthy of your attention." During this conversation, a poor mendicant, with hat in hand, humbly begged a few farthings: the monarch, deaf to his petition and taking no notice of him pursued his way. The suppliant followed the king, always holding out his hand, always renewing his importunate entreaty: but, with upturned eyes, Alphonso kept repeating in one strain: "I shall look on the men in the moon." At length the beggar seized him by his royal mantle and gravely said to him: "It is not of the skies, but of the realm in which we are that God has made you the sovereign. Look at your feet; there you will behold men, and men wanting bread."

YOUNG BACCHUS AND THE FAUN.

ONE day young Bacchus, then pupil to Silenus, was cultivating the Muses in a grotto, the solemn silence of which was only interrupted by the murmurs of some gentle stream and by the melody of warbling birds. The sun's bright beams could never penetrate its gloomy shades. The young offspring of Semele, in order to study the language of the gods, sat himself down in a corner at the foot of an old oak, to whose prolific trunk thousands, in the golden age, owed their existence. Nay, the very oracles of old had been delivered from it, and Time had not been so presumptuous as to cut it down with his sharp scythe. Behind this hallowed tree, a young faun had concealed himself, who listened with attention to the verses which the young god repeated, and took notice to Silenus, by a scornful smile, of every little fault his pupil made. Every now and then the Naiades and the wood-nymphs would likewise smile. The critic was young, facetious and wanton; his head was crowned with vine-leaves and ivy: his temples were adorned with grapes. From his left shoulder to his right side, hung a garland of ivy-berries in the manner of a scarf, and young Bacchus was pleased to see these leaves devoted to his god-head. The faun was drest, from the waist upwards, in the frightful shaggy skin of a young lioness, which he had slain in the forest. In his hand he bore a knotty shepherd's crook. His tail behind played as it were upon his back: but as Bacchus could no longer bear the insolence of the audacious critic, who was always ready to censure any expression that he deemed in the least incorrect or inelegant, he said to him in a hasty, passionate tone. "How darest thou make these saucy remarks on the son of Jove?" The faun, without the least discomposure replied: "How dare the son of Jove be guilty of such blunders?"

THE PARTRIDGE AND THE COCKS.

A SPORTSMAN having taken a partridge, plucked some of the feathers out of its wings, and turned it into a little yard where he kept game cocks. The cocks for awhile made the poor bird lead a sad life, continually pecking and driving it away from its food. This treatment was taken the more unkindly, because offered to a stranger; and the partridge could not but conclude them the most inhospitable, uncivil people he had ever met with. But at last, observing how frequently they quarrelled and fought with each other, he comforted himself with this reflection:—That it was no wonder they were cruel to him, since there was so much bickering and animosity amongst themselves.

THE HUNTED BEAVER.

IT is said that the beaver (a creature which lives chiefly in the water) has a certain part about him which is good in physic, and that, upon this account, he is often hunted down and killed. Once upon a time, as one of these creatures was hard pursued by the dogs and knew not how to escape, recollecting the reason of his being thus persecuted, he, with great resolution and presence of mind, bit off the part which his hunters wanted, and throwing it towards them, by these means escaped with his life.

However it may be among beasts there are few human creatures hunted but it is for something besides either their lives, or the pleasure of hunting them. The Inquisition, and indeed most of the European nations in former times, would hardly have been so keen against the Jews if they had not had something which their persecutors esteemed more valuable than their souls; which, whenever that wise but obstinate people could prevail with themselves to part with, there was an end of the chase for that time. Indeed, when life is pursued and in danger, whoever values it should give up everything but his honour to preserve it. And when a discarded minister is persecuted for having damaged the commonwealth, let him but throw down some of the fruits of his iniquity to the hunters, and one may engage for his coming off, in other respects, with a whole skin.

THE LION AND THE FROG.

THE lion, hearing an odd kind of hollow voice, and seeing nobody, started up: he listened again, and perceiving the voice to continue, trembled and quaked for fear. At last, seeing a frog crawl out of the lake, and finding that the noise he had heard was nothing but the croaking of that little creature, he went up to it, and partly out of anger, partly contempt, spurned it to pieces with his foot.

This Fable is a pretty image of the vain fears and empty terrors with which our weak, misguided nature is so apt to be alarmed and distracted. If we hear ever so slight a noise, which we are not able to account for immediately, nay, often before we give ourselves time to consider about it, we are struck with fear, and labour under a most unmanly, unreasonable trepidation: more especially if the alarm happens when we are alone and in the dark. These notions are ingrafted in our minds very early, and therefore it is the more difficult, when we are grown up and ashamed of them, to root them out of our nature. But, in order to do it, it is well worth observing that the most learned, ingenious, and candid writers, in all ages, have ridiculed and exploded the belief of such phantoms, as the weaker part of mankind are apt to be terrified with; intimating that goblins spectres, apparitions, fairies, ghosts, etc. were invented by knaves to frighten fools with.

THE SWAIN AND THE HORSE.

'Twas at a merry country fair,
Deck'd by his master's hand with care,
A cunning wight, (who gathered wealth
By cheating, artifice and stealth;)
A horse, most sightly to behold,
With pomp brought forward to be sold!
Around him straight, the dealers flew,
Bright was his bit, his saddle new,
His clothing swept upon the plain,
And ribands gay ador'd his mane;
In short, his numerous faults to hide,
No pains were spared, no art untried;
And so the wily owner's tongue,
Vociferous in his praises rung,
Till, much convinc'd they all confest,
They ne'er had seen so fine a beast.
Charm'd with th' applause the crowd bestow'd,—
The care the crafty vendor shew'd,
His dress, that greatly pleased his eye,
A swain resolved the horse to buy;
And, flush'd with money, in a trice,
Without a cavil paid the price.
But note the sequel of my Fable!
Lodg'd safely in the buyer's stable,
The hind, removing all disguise,
Mark'd well his legs, his teeth, his eyes,
And found him, and it vex'd his mind,
Splinter'd, decrepid, gall'd, and blind;
And, to augment his spleen and shame,
On crossing him, the horse was lame.
"Fool that I was," exclaimed the swain,
Boiling with rage, and inward pain,
"To purchase such an arrant beast!
He should have one good point, at least!
But he's so faulty, I confess,
His only value is his dress."

THE OWL AND THE TREASURE-SEEKER.

A certain treasure-seeker who was a very unreasonable man, ventured among the ruins of an old castle, and perceived there an owl which had caught a half-starved mouse to devour it. "Is that fitting," said he, "for the philosophical favourite of Minerva?"—"Why not?" replied the owl; "because I am fond of quiet meditation, can I therefore live upon air? though I am well aware that mankind frequently condemn the learned to such diet."

THE FOWLER AND THE BLACKBIRD.

A FOWLER was placing his nets, and putting his tackle in order by the side of a copse, when a blackbird, who saw him, had the curiosity to enquire what he was doing? "I am building a city," said he, "for you birds to live in; and providing it with meat, and all manner of conveniences for you." Having said this, he departed and hid himself; and the blackbird, believing the words, came into the nets and was taken. But when the man came up to take hold of him: "If this," said he, "be your faith and honesty, and these the cities you build, I am of opinion that you will have but few inhabitants."

This fowler acted a part very like that which some politicians do, when they tell the people that the projects which they have contrived, with a separate view, and for their own private interests, are laid for the benefit of all that come into them. And to such the blackbird truly speaks when he affirms, that projectors of such schemes will find but few to stick by them in the long run. We exclaim against it as something very base and dishonest, when those of a different nation, even though our enemies, break the faith which they have publicly plighted, and trick us out of our properties. But what must we call it when governors themselves circumvent their own people, and, contrary to the terms upon which they are admitted to govern, contrive traps and gins to catch and ensnare them in. Such governors may succeed in their plot the first time, but must not be surprised if those who have once escaped their clutches, never have opinion enough of them to trust them again.

THE CORMORANT AND THE FISHES.

IT is very imprudent to trust an enemy, or even a stranger, so far as to put one's self in his power.

A cormorant, whose eyes had become so dim by age that he could not discern his prey at the bottom of the waters, bethought himself of a stratagem to supply his wants. "Hark you, friend," said he to a gudgeon, whom he observed swimming on the surface of a certain canal, "if you have any regard for yourself or your brethren, go this moment and acquaint them from me, that the owner of this piece of water is determined to drag it a week hence." The gudgeon immediately swam away, and made his report of this terrible news to a general assembly of the fishes, who unanimously agreed to send him back as their ambassador to the cormorant. The purport of his commission was to return him thanks for the intelligence, and add their entreaties, that, as he had been so good as to inform them of their danger, he would be graciously pleased to put them into a method of escaping it. "That I will most readily," returned the artful cormorant, "and assist you with my best services into the bargain. You have only to collect yourselves together at the top of the water, and I will undertake to transport you, one by one, to my own residence, by the side of a solitary pool, to which no creature but myself ever found the way." The project was perfectly approved of by the unwary fishes, and with great expedition performed by the deceitful cormorant; who having placed them in shallow water, the bottom of which his eye could easily discern, they were all devoured by him in their turns, as his hunger or luxury required.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE ROSE.

A FINE powdered butterfly fell in love with a beautiful rose, which expanded her charms in a neighbouring parterre. Matters were soon adjusted between them, and they mutually vowed eternal fidelity. The butterfly, perfectly satisfied with the success of his amour, took a tender leave of his mistress and did not return again till noon. "What!" said the rose, when she saw him approaching, "is the ardent passion you vowed so soon extinguished? It is an age since you paid me a visit. But no wonder: for I observed you courting by turns every flower in the garden."—"You little coquette," replied the butterfly, "it well becomes you truly, to reproach me with my gallantries: when in fact I only copy the example which you yourself have set me. For, not to mention the satisfaction with which you have admitted the kisses of the balmy zephyr, did I not see you displaying your fragrant charms to the bee, the fly, the wasp, and, in short, encouraging and receiving the addresses of every buzzing insect that fluttered within your view? If you will be a coquette, you must expect to find me inconstant."

THE JACKDAW AND THE PIGEONS.

A JACKDAW, observing that the pigeons in a certain dove-cote lived well and wanted for nothing, whitewashed his feathers, and, endeavouring to look as much like a dove as he could, went and lived among them. The pigeons not distinguishing him as long as he kept silent, forbore to give him any disturbance. But at last he forgot his character and began to chatter; by which the pigeons discovering what he was, flew upon him, and beat him away, so that he was obliged to fly back to the jackdaws again. They, not knowing him in his discoloured feathers, drove him away likewise, till, in the end, he who had endeavoured to be more than he had a right to, was not permitted to be anything at all.

THE FARMER AND THE STAG.

A STAG, who had left at a distance a pack of hounds, came up to a farmer, and desired that he would suffer him to hide himself in a little coppice adjoining his house. The farmer, on condition that he would forbear to enter a field of wheat which lay before him, and was now ready for the sickle, immediately gave him leave, and promised not to betray him. The squire with his train instantly appeared, and enquired whether he had not seen the stag. "No," said the farmer, "he has not passed this way, I assure you;" but, in order to curry favour at the same time with his worship, he pointed slily with his finger to the place where the poor beast lay concealed. This, however, the sportsman, intent on his game, did not observe, but passed on with his dogs across the very field. As soon as the stag perceived that they were gone, he prepared to steal off without speaking a word. "Methinks," cried the farmer, "you might thank me at least for the refuge I afforded you."—"Yes," said the stag; "and had your hands been as honest as your tongue, I certainly should; but all the return that a double dealer has to expect, is just indignation and contempt."

THE DEADLY NIGHTSHADE.*

"Detested weed," enraged I cried,
"That spread'st thy poisoned train
In this fair land, in all their pride,
Where beauteous flowerets grace the plain!

"Thy baleful roots most surely rise,
From dismal, deep Tartarean shade,
By demons nursed in nether skies,
In horrid Stygian gloom arrayed.

"Thee Circe, and Medæa too,
In blackest, dire enchantment used;
And from thy poisonous influence drew
Those curses which high Heaven refused.

"Say fell enchantress of the place,
The foe profest of human-kind?
Say, for what crimes man's hapless race
From thee such numerous evils find!

"Oh! quit the woods, the plains, the fields,
Where smiling health and plenty bloom,
Retire to rocks and desert-wilds;
Or shade the murderer's horrid tomb!

"But here may every healing flower
In all the prime of beauty bloom:
Restoring health with genial power,
And ever shedding rich perfume!"

I ceased—the flower indignant heard,
And all its leaves displayed
A deepening gloom, and straight appeared
A double night of dismal shade.

"Insulting man!" she trembling cries,
"Of all the creatures most unjust;
Prompt to tax Heaven with ills that rise,
From his own wild and evil lust.

"Go, ask of genial Bacchus' vine,
Where beauteous purple clusters grow;
Whose juice produces generous wine,
The boasted balm of human woe.

* The juice of this weed was generally supposed to be used in enchantments. There are, however, several sorts of it, of which none are esteemed deadly, save that here mentioned, the juice of the berries of which so intoxicated the soldiers of Sweno, the Danish king, on being mixed in their liquor, that they became an easy prey to the Scots' army, which surprised and cut most of them to pieces.

"Go, ask what various ills succeed,
That sweet and precious balm's abuse;
Ills that too surely even exceed
Those of my sad and baneful juice.

"Yet baneful where? when misapplied,
So is each high prized blessing too;
This lesson learn! Repress thy pride,
Nor seek to rob me of my due!

"Know the same power that bade me grow,
Gave every flower to bloom,
To whom as sweet my blossoms glow
As those which shed perfume.

"Let man his passions wild command
And hush them wisely into peace;
For Circe's cup, Medæa's wand,
Were innocent compared to these.

"For me, great Nature's will displayed;
Contented I shall here fulfil;
Nor dream that aught which she has made,
Should ever be accounted ill."

Go thou, fond youth, and Virtue's power
With equal care and joy obey:
Then every weed shall prove a flower,
To strew, through life, thy destined way.

GENIUS, VIRTUE, AND REPUTATION.

Genius, Virtue, and Reputation, three intimate friends, agreed to travel over the Island of Great Britain, to see whatever might be worthy of observation. "But as some misfortune," said they, "may happen to separate us, let us consider before we set out, by what means we may find each other again."—"Should it be my ill fate," said Genius, "to be severed from you, my associates, which Heaven forbid! you may find me kneeling in devotion before the tomb of Shakspere; or rapt in some grove where Milton talked with angels; or musing in the grotto where Pope caught inspiration." Virtue, with a sigh, acknowledged that her friends were very numerous; "But were I to lose you," she cried "with whom I am at present so happily united, I should choose to take sanctuary in the temples of religion, in the palaces of royalty, or in the stately domes of ministers of state; but as it may be my ill fortune to be there denied admittance, enquire for some cottage where contentment has a bower, and there you will certainly find me."—"Ah! my dear companions," said Reputation, very earnestly, "you, I perceive, when missing, may possibly be recovered; but take care, I entreat you, always to keep sight of me; for if I am once lost, I am never to be retrieved."



THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERDS.

THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERDS.

We are all apt enough to condemn in others what we practise ourselves without scruple.

Plutarch relates that a prowling wolf, coming to a place where a company of shepherds were assembled to regale themselves with a dinner of mutton, exclaimed indignantly against their proceedings: "What a clamour," said he, "would these same men have raised, had they caught me at such a banquet!"

THE SULTAN AND THE OWLS.

The sultan Mahmoud, by his perpetual wars abroad, and his tyranny at home, had filled his dominions with ruin and desolation, and half unpeopled the Persian Empire. The vizier to this great sultan (whether a humorist or an enthusiast, we are not informed), pretended to have learned of a certain dervise to understand the language of birds, so that there was not a bird that could open his mouth, but the vizier knew what it was he said. As he was one evening with the sultan, on his return from hunting, they saw a couple of owls upon a tree that grew near an old wall out of a heap of rubbish. "I would fain know," said the sultan, "what those two owls are saying to one another; listen to their discourse, and give me an account of it." The vizier approached the tree, pretending to be very attentive to the two owls. Upon his return to the sultan; "Sir," said he, "I have heard part of their conversation, but dare not tell you what it is." The sultan would not be satisfied by such an answer, but forced him to repeat word for word, every thing the owls had said. "You must know, then," said the vizier, "that one of the owls has a son, and the other a daughter, between whom, they are now upon a treaty of marriage. The father of the son said in my hearing to the father of the daughter, 'Brother, I consent to this marriage, provided you will settle upon your daughter fifty ruined villages for her portion.' To which the father of the daughter replied, 'Instead of fifty, I will give her five hundred, if you please. God grant a long life to sultan Mahmoud; whilst he reigns over us, we shall never want ruined villages.'"

The sultan was so touched with the Fable, that he rebuilt the towns and villages which had been destroyed, and from that time forward, consulted the good of the people.

THE GNAT AND THE BEE.

A gnat, half-starved with cold, and pinched with hunger, came early one morning to a bee-hive, begging the relief of charity, and offering to teach music in the family, on the humble terms of diet and lodging. The bee received her petitioner with cold civility, and desired to be excused. "I bring up all my children," said she, "to my own useful trade, that they may be able when they grow up, to get an honest livelihood by their industry. Besides, how do you think I could be so imprudent as to teach them an art which I see has reduced its professor to indigence and beggary?"

THE TWO LIZARDS.

As two lizards were basking under a south wall: "How contemptible," said one of them, "is our condition! we exist, it is true, but that is all, for we hold no sort of rank in the creation, and are utterly unnoticed by the world. Cursed obscurity! why was I not born a stag, to range at large, the pride and glory of some royal forest?" It happened, that in the midst of these unjust murmurs, a pack of hounds was heard in full cry after the very creature he was envying, which being quite spent with the chase, was torn in pieces by the dogs in sight of the two lizards. "And is this the lordly stag, whose place in the creation you wish to hold?" said the wiser lizard to his complaining friend: let his fate teach you to bless Providence for placing you in that humble situation which secures you from the dangers of a more elevated rank."

THE EAGLE AND THE OWL.

The eagle and the owl having entered into a league of mutual amity, one of the articles of their treaty was that the former should not prey upon the younglings of the latter. "But how," said the eagle, "shall I know your little ones, if I see them?"—"I will describe them to you," said the owl. "You are to observe then, in the first place, that the charming creatures are perfectly well shaped; in the next, that there is a remarkable sweetness and vivacity in their countenances, and something in their voices peculiarly melodious."—"'Tis enough" interrupted the eagle; "by these marks I cannot fail of distinguishing them: and you may depend upon their never receiving any injury from me." It happened not long afterwards, as the eagle was upon the wing in quest of prey, that he discovered, amid the ruins of an old castle, a nest of grim-faced, ugly birds, with gloomy countenances, and a voice like that of the Furies. "These undoubtedly," said he, "cannot be the offspring of my friend, and so I shall venture to make free with them." He had scarcely finished his repast and departed, when the owl returned; who, finding nothing of her brood remaining, but some fragments of the mangled carcases, broke out into the most bitter exclamations against the cruel and perfidious author of her calamity. A neighbouring bat, who overheard her lamentations, and had been witness to what had passed between her and the eagle, very gravely told her, that she had nobody to blame for this misfortune but herself; whose blind prejudices in favour of her children had prompted her to give such a description of them, as did not resemble them in any one single feature or quality.

Parents should very carefully guard against that weak partiality towards their children, which renders them blind to their failings and imperfections: as no disposition is more prejudicial to their future welfare.

THE HEN AND THE SWALLOW.

A hen, finding some serpent's eggs in a dunghill, sat upon them with design to hatch them. A swallow perceiving it, flew towards her, and with some warmth, said: "Are you mad, to sit hovering over a brood of such pernicious creatures? Be assured, the moment you bring them to light, the first they will attack and wreak their venom upon will be yourself."

THE COLLIER AND THE FULLER.

A collier and a fuller, being old acquaintances, happened to meet together; and the latter, being ill provided with a habitation, was invited by the former to come and live in the same house with him. "I thank you, my dear friend," replied the fuller, "for your kind offer, but it cannot be: for if I were to dwell with you, whatever I should take pains to scour and make clean in the morning, the dust of your coals would blacken and defile, as bad as ever, before night."

It is of no small importance in life, to be cautious what company we keep, and with whom we enter into friendship; for though we are ever so well disposed ourselves, and happen to be ever so free from vice and debauchery, yet if those with whom we frequently converse are engaged in a lewd, wicked course, it will be almost impossible for us to escape being drawn in with them. Reputations are of a subtle, insinuating texture, like water; that which is derived from the clearest spring, if it chances to mix with a foul current, runs on undistinguished, in one muddy stream for the future, and must for ever partake of the colour and condition of its associate.

THE SPIDER AND THE SILK-WORM.

How vainly do we promise ourselves that our flimsy productions will be rewarded with immortal honour!

A spider, busied in spreading his web from one side of the room to the other, was asked by an industrious silk-worm, to what end he spent so much time and labour, in making such a number of lines and circles? The spider angrily replied: "Do not disturb me, thou ignorant thing. I transmit my ingenuity to posterity, and fame is the object of my wishes." Just as he had spoken, a chambermaid coming into the room to feed her silk-worms, saw the spider at his work: and with one stroke of her broom swept him away, destroying at once his labours and his hopes of fame.

THE PASSENGER AND THE PILOT.

It had blown a violent storm at sea, and the whole crew of a large vessel were in imminent danger of shipwreck. After the rolling of the waves was somewhat abated, a passenger who had never been at sea before, observing the pilot to have appeared wholly unconcerned, even in their greatest danger, had the curiosity to ask him what death his father died. "What death?" said the pilot, "why he perished at sea, as my grandfather did before him."—"And are you not afraid of trusting yourself to an element that has proved thus fatal to your family?"—"Afraid! by no means; why, we must all die: is not your father dead?"—"Yes but he died in his bed."—"And why then are you not afraid of trusting yourself to your bed?"—"Because I am there perfectly secure."—"It may be so," replied the pilot, "but if the hand of Providence is equally extended over all places, there is no more reason for me to be afraid of going to sea, than for you to be afraid of going to bed."

THE WASP AND THE BEE.

A WASP met a bee, and said to him: "Pray can you tell me what is the reason that men are so ill-natured to me, while they are so fond of you? We are both very much alike, only that the broad golden rings about my body make me much handsomer than you are: we are both winged insects, we both love honey, and we both sting people when we are angry; yet men always hate me, and try to kill me, though I am much more familiar with them than you are, and pay them visits in their houses, and at their tea-table, and at all their meals; while you are very shy, and hardly ever come near them; yet they build you curious houses, thatched with straw, and take care of and feed you in the winter very often. I wonder what is the reason."

The bee said: "Because you never do them any good; but, on the contrary, are very troublesome and mischievous, therefore they do not like to see you; but they know that I am busy all day long in making them honey. You had better pay them fewer visits, and try to be useful."

THE GOOSE AND THE HORSE

A GOOSE, who was plucking grass upon a common, thought herself affronted by a horse who fed near her; and, in hissing accents, thus addressed him: "I am certainly a more noble and perfect animal than you, for the whole range and extent of your faculties is confined to one element. I can walk upon the ground as well as you; I have besides, wings, with which I can raise myself in the air; and when I please, I can sport on ponds and lakes, and refresh myself in the cool waters. I enjoy the different powers of a bird, a fish, and a quadruped."

The horse, snorting somewhat disdainfully, replied: "It is true you inhabit three elements, but you make no very distinguished figure in any one of them. You fly, indeed; but your flight is so heavy and clumsy, that you have no right to put yourself on a level with the lark or the swallow. You can swim on the surface of the waters, but you cannot live in them as fishes do; you cannot find your food in that element, nor glide smoothly along the bottom of the waves. And when you walk, or rather waddle upon the ground, with your broad feet and your long neck stretched out, hissing at every one who passes by, you bring upon yourself the derision of all beholders. I confess that I am only formed to move upon the ground; but how graceful is my make! how well turned my limbs! how highly finished my whole body! how great my strength! how astonishing my speed! I had much rather be confined to one element, and be admired in that, than be a goose in all."

THE FOX AND THE VIZOR-MASK.

A FOX, being in a shop where vizor-masks were sold, laid his foot upon one of them, and, considering it awhile attentively, at last broke forth into this exclamation: "Bless me! what a handsome figure this makes! What a pity that it should want brains!"

THE DERVISE.

A DERVISE, travelling through Tartary, being arrived at the town of Balk, went into the king's palace by mistake, thinking it to be a public inn or caravansary. Having looked about for some time, he entered into a long gallery, where he laid down his wallet, and spread his carpet, in order to repose himself upon it after the manner of the Eastern nations. He had not been long in this posture before he was discovered by some of the guards, who asked him what was his business in that place? The dervise told them he intended to take up his night's lodging in that caravansary. The guards let him know, in a very angry manner, that the house he was in was not a caravansary, but the king's palace. It happened that the king himself passed through the gallery during the debate, and, smiling at the mistake of the dervise, asked him how he could possibly be so dull as not to distinguish a palace from a caravansary? "Sire," said the dervise, "give me leave to ask your majesty a question or two. Who were the persons that lodged in this house when it was first built?" The king replied, "My ancestors."—"And who," said the dervise, "was the last person that lodged here?" The king replied, "My father."—"And who is it," said the dervise, "that lodges here at present?" The king told him that it was himself. "And who," asked the dervise, "will be here after you?" The king answered, "The young prince my son."—"Ah! Sir," said the dervise, "a house that changes its inhabitants so often and receives such a perpetual succession of guests, is not a palace but a caravansary."

This very beautiful Fable is evidently intended to shew us how little we should pride ourselves upon worldly possessions, which are constantly changing owners, and will avail us nothing at our final account.

THE MOLE AND HER DAM.

A YOUNG mole snuffed up her nose, and told her dam she smelt an odd kind of a smell. By-and-bye; "O strange!" said she, "what a noise there is in my ears, as if ten thousand paper-mills were going." A little after she was at it again: "Look, look, what is that I see yonder? It is just like the flame of a fiery furnace." To whom the dam replied, "Pr'ythee, child, hold your idle tongue; and if you would have us allow you any sense at all, do not affect to shew more than Nature has given you."

It is wonderful that affectation, that odious quality, should have been always so common and epidemical; since it is not more disagreeable to others, than hurtful to the person that wears it. By affectation, we aim at being thought to possess some accomplishment which we have not, or at shewing what we have, in a conceited ostentatious manner. Now this we may be assured of, that, among discerning people at least, when we endeavour at anything of this kind, instead of succeeding in the attempt, we detract from some real possession, and make qualities, that would otherwise pass well enough, appear nauseous and fulsome. Is it not ridiculous to see an old battered beau put himself to pain, that he may appear to tread firm, and walk strong and upright? a man, defective in his eyes, run against a post, rather than confess he wants a guide? and one that is deaf, mistaking everything you say, rather than you should suspect he cannot hear? Yet, perhaps, these things are done every day, and imitated in some other affectation, by the very people that laugh at them.

THE IVY AND THE THYME.

Of such as idle dreams inflame,
Of authorship and wealth, and fame;
Who quit their traffic on the 'Change,
Thro' fancy's fairy walks to range;
In poplar shades who verses write,
When they should invoices indite,
And, figures in their ledgers scorning,
Figures apply to noon and morning,
Or let attention be arrested
On notes, while bills are oft protested;
Of such, I say, as waste their time
In spinning prose, or weaving rhyme;
Who deem themselves, with pride elate,
Poets sublime, and critics great,
Because in books they may have noted
Some trivial faults, by others quoted,
Or penn'd a prologue to a play,
A sonnet, or a love-sick lay;
To check their arrogance I'll try,
Who thus their talents misapply.
I've read, forsooth, I know not where,—
That mem'ry's treacherous all declare!—
With many a joke, in doggrel rhyme,
The ivy jeer'd the lowly thyme,
Because he seldom reared his head,
But grew ignobly near a shed:
" Friend," said the shrub, " how comes it so?
Thy thoughts thus grovelling are and low?
For though thy humble form can boast
The odours of Arabia's coast,
Of all the plants that grow around,
Thou art the nearest to the ground."—
" Friend," said the thyme, " to gain the skies
Like thee, I never wish to rise.
I lead an independent life,
Remote from care, unknown to strife,
Nor from another's aid profess
To owe the comforts I possess—
But, oh! how changed thy lot to mine
Should that, you rest on, e'er decline;
If e'er yon rude majestic oak
Should fall beneath the woodman's stroke,

Or yon stupendous tower, thy trust,
Be crumbled into native dust,
Thou, then, must be in ruin laid,
And I be doomed thy corse to shade."

THE TWO MICE.

A MOUSE, perfectly fatigued with living in perpetual danger and alarm, on account of the cats and the bacon-eating rascals, who made such havoc of the mician race. called to her companion, who lay perdue in an adjacent hole. "I have a thought," said she, "come into my head. I observed in a book of travels, which I was nibbling the other day, that there is a fine country called the Indies, where our people meet with much more civility, and live freer from insults than we do here. In that country, their doctors are of opinion that the soul of a mouse may have formerly animated some brave general, king, or celebrated fakir; and that, after its death, it may enter into the body of some distinguished beauty, or noted pendiar. To the best of my remembrance, these transformations are called the metempsychosis. As this is their received opinion, they treat the whole race of animals with fraternal affection; there are hospitals erected for mice, who have annual pensions, and are maintained like persons of quality. Come, sister, let us sail for that glorious country, where the people are governed by such wholesome laws, and where our merit will meet with its due reward." Her companion replied: "But, sister, are there no cats residing in those hospitals? If so, they would make abundance of those same metempsychoses in a very little time; and at one gripe with their teeth or claws, send our souls to animate some king, or fakir, a piece of preferment that neither of us would be over-fond of."—"Never fear that," said the former; "they are complete economists in that country. The cats have their distinct mansions, as we have, and they have hospitals likewise for their invalids, at a due distance from ours."

Hereupon our two mice set out together; they went on board a vessel bound for the Indian coast, by creeping along some cables, in the dusk of the evening, just before the captain weighed anchor. Soon afterwards the ship sailed, and they were transported to find themselves upon the sea, far distant from that fatal shore where the cats ruled with such tyrannic power. They had a good passage, and arrived at Surat, not with a view to enrich themselves, as most merchants do, but to meet with a courteous reception from the Indians. No sooner were they admitted into one of their mician habitations, than they laid claim to the most commodious apartment. One of them pretented that she very well remembered her being formerly a celebrated brahmin on the coast of Malabar. The other insisted that she had been a beautiful lady of the same place, where she was universally admired for her long ears. They behaved themselves with such insolence indeed, that the Indian mice could not endure them. A civil war ensued. They gave no quarter to these two pragmatical Europeans, who audaciously endeavoured to turn law-givers, and assume a superiority over others. Instead of being devoured by the cats, they were strangled by their own sisters. It is to no purpose, therefore, to travel into foreign parts to fly from danger. Unless we have discretion, we merely go afar off to seek misfortunes, which we may as well meet at home.

THE FOX AND THE RAVEN.

Master Raven sate perch'd on the top of a tree,
A cheese stuff'd the beak of this sable marauder;
Allured by the smell, Master Fox came to see
What it was through the air spread so tempting an odour;
When thus he began: "Ah, Sir Ralph!—a good morning:
How charming you look, and how tasteful your dress!
Those bright glossy plumes, your fine person adorning,
Produce an effect which I cannot express.
Colours glaring and tawdry were never my choice;
When I view them, disgust is my only sensation:
If you join to that plumage a mellow-toned voice,
You're the phœnix, I vow, of the feathered creation."
The raven, cajol'd, ope'd his bill of vast size,
To give his new friend a sweet sample of croaking;
In the jaws of sly Renard down dropped the rich prize;
Who then took his leave with this lecture provoking:
"Honest Ralph, this conclusion the premises follows;
Give me leave your attention the maxim to press on:
He who flatters will cheat the vain blockhead who swallows.
At the price of a cheese 'tis a very cheap lesson."
The raven ashamed, swore a little too late,
Never more he'd be caught by so worthless a bait.

THE OWL THAT LONGED TO BE MARRIED.

A young owl who had surveyed his person in a fountain, and thought himself much fairer, not than the light, for that was very disagreeable to him, but than the night, which was the object he admired, said to himself: "I have sacrificed to the Graces. Venus, when I was born, drest me in her girdle. The little wanton, smiling Loves, stand hovering round me and court my favour. It is now high time that the gay god of marriage should give me a numerous offspring as beauteous as myself; they shall be the glory of the groves and the darlings of the night. What a pity it would be that the race of the most accomplished birds should be extinct! Happy the bride that shall hereafter call me her own!"

Big with this thought, he sends the crow ambassadress, on his part, to the king of the birds, to demand for him his royal daughter in marriage. The crow could scarcely be prevailed on to accept of this commission. "I shall be but coldly received," said she, "on the proposition of so unsuitable a match. Can you imagine that the eaglet, who can gaze on the sun, unhurt with steadfast eyes, will marry you, who cannot so much as open your eyes whilst it is daylight? It is certain that both of you would desire to live in a state of separation: one of you flying abroad all day, the other all night."

The proud, self-conceited owl, was deaf to all dissuasion. The crow, to soothe his vanity, went at last to propose the match. She was sufficiently laughed at



THE FOX AHD THE RAVEN.

for her ridiculous demand. The eagle answered her: "If the owl is ambitious of being my son-in-law, let him meet me to-morrow morning in the centre of the aerial regions."

The presumptuous owl determined at all events to pay the visit. His eyes were immediately dazzled, the rays of the sun struck him blind, and he fell headlong from on high, down on a rock. All the birds rushed at once upon him, and stripped him of his plumes. He was so happy, however, as to hide himself at last in his old dark hole, and to marry a young owl that was a worthy tenant of an adjacent cavern. Their nuptials were solemnized by night, and they thought each other extremely handsome, and the most agreeable company imaginable.

Remembering the fall of the owl, we ought not to be vain-glorious, nor aim at shining in a sphere that is above us.

THE CALIPH.

The Caliph Almamoun, who once reigned in Bagdad, built a palace which, in beauty and magnificence, was superior to the renowned one of Solomon. Its portico was composed of a hundred alabaster columns; gold, jaspar and azure adorned the courts, and, beneath roofs of cedar, glittered both the treasures of luxury and of nature—flowers, jewels, fragrance, verdure, odoriferous myrtles, gems of art, and bubbling fountains, the rebounding waters of which fell close to couches of purple and brocade. Near the entrance of this splendid palace stood a narrow, old and ruinous cottage, the lowly dwelling of a poor weaver. There, contented with the trifling pittance of incessant labour, without debt and without anxiety, free and unnoticed, the good old man tranquilly passed his days, envying nobody, and envied by none. As his abode fronted the royal mansion, the vizier wished at once, without ceremony, to have the hovel pulled down, but the Caliph commanded that its value should first be offered to the owner. Accordingly, the artisan was visited, and the influence of gold exerted to make him renounce his habitation. "No, keep your money," the poor man mildly replied. "My loom places me beyond want, and as to my house, I cannot part with it. Here I was born, here my father expired, and here I hope to die. The Caliph if he pleases, can drive me away and destroy my home, but if he does so, he will behold me every morning seated on its last stone, and weeping at my misery. I know that Almamoun's heart would be touched at my desolation." This bold language provoked the vizier to wrath, who wanted to punish the rash cottager, and instantly level with the dust his pitiful shed. But the Caliph would not sanction this cruelty, and said: "At my cost let this cottage be repaired; my glory will live with its continuance. I trust that posterity, on looking at it, will esteem it an august monument of my reign. Contemplating the palace they will say, 'He was great,' and when they behold the hut, they will exclaim: 'He was just!'"

THE DOG AND THE SHEEP.

A dog sued a sheep for debt, and the kite and wolf were appointed judges of the cause. These honest personages, without debating long upon the matter, or making any stir about evidence, gave sentence for the plaintiff, who immediately tore the poor sheep in pieces, and divided the spoil with the unjust judges.

THE MOUSE, THE LAP-DOG, AND THE MONKEY.

A poor little mouse, being half-starved, ventured one day to steal from behind the wainscot while the family were at dinner, and, trembling all the while, picked up a few crumbs which were scattered on the ground. She was observed, however: everybody was immediately alarmed; some called for the cat; others took up whatever was at hand, and endeavoured to crush her to pieces; and the poor terrified animal was driven round the room in an agony of terror. At length, however, she was fortunate enough to gain her hole, where she sat panting with fatigue. When the family were again seated, a lap-dog and a monkey came into the room. The former jumped into the lap of his mistress, fawned upon every one of the children, and made his court so effectually, that he was rewarded with some of the best morsels of the entertainment. The monkey, on the other hand, forced himself into notice by his grimaces. He played a thousand little mischievous tricks, and was regaled, at the appearance of the dessert with plenty of nuts and apples. The unfortunate little mouse, who saw from her hiding-place every thing that passed, sighed in anguish of heart, and said to herself: "Alas! how ignorant was I, to imagine that poverty and distress were sufficient recommendations to the charity of the opulent. I now find, that whoever is not master of fawning and buffoonery, is but ill qualified for a dependant, and will not be suffered even to pick up the crumbs that fall from the table."

JUPITER AND THE ASS.

An ass which belonged to a gardener, and was weary of carrying heavy burdens, prayed to Jupiter to give him a new master. Jupiter, consenting to his petition, gave him a tile-maker, who loaded him with tiles, and made him carry heavier burdens than before. Again he came and made supplications, beseeching the god to give him one that was more mild, or at least, to let him have any other master but this. Jupiter could not choose but laugh at his folly; however, he granted his request this time also, and made him over to a tanner. But, as soon as the poor ass was sensible what a master he had got, he could not forbear upbraiding himself with his great folly and inconstancy, which had brought him to a master not only more cruel and exacting than any of the former, but one that would not spare his hide after he was dead.

This Fable is a lively representation of the instability of mankind, who are seldom or never contented with their own lot. But, whatever men may think, it is a thousand to one but they know less of any other way, than of that in which they have been bred: and if Providence should comply with their humorous request in such a case, they would probably find themselves more at a loss, and more uneasy in their new station of life, than ever they were in the old; at least, there is great reason to suppose they would. The vanity and ignorance of men are so great, that if every man might be what he desired, few would be what they ought. So that it is not of less importance to the good of the public in general, than our own particular quiet and happiness, that every man should be easy and contented with the condition which Providence and his education have allotted him.

THE DOVE AND THE ANT.

We should always be ready to do good offices even to the meanest of our fellow-creatures, as there is no one to whose assistance we may not, upon some occasion or other, be greatly indebted.

A dove was sipping from the banks of a rivulet, when an ant, who was at the same time trailing a grain of corn along the edge of a brook, inadvertently fell in. The dove, observing the helpless insect struggling in vain to reach the shore, was touched with compassion, and plucking a blade of grass, dropped it into the stream, by means of which the poor ant, like a shipwrecked sailor on a plank, got safe to land. She had scarcely arrived there, when she perceived a fowler just going to discharge his piece at her deliverer, upon which she instantly crept up his foot, and stung him on the ancle. The sportsman, starting, occasioned a rustling among the boughs, which alarmed the dove, who immediately sprung up, and by that means escaped the danger with which she was threatened.

THE WASPS.

Putrefaction and corruption destroyed the sleek fabric of a charger, which had been shot under its bold master. A swarm of young wasps were soon bred by the carrion. "How divine is our origin," exclaimed the wasps. "The noble courser, Neptune's favourite, is our progenitor!"

This reminds us of the modern Italians, who regard themselves as nothing less than the descendants of the immortal ancient Romans, because they were born on the graves of the latter.

THE PARROT.

A certain widower, in order to amuse his solitary hours, and in some measure supply the conversation of his departed helpmate, of loquacious memory, determined to purchase a parrot. With this view, he applied to a dealer in birds, who shewed him a large collection of parrots of various kinds. While they were exercising their talkative talents before him, one repeating the cries of the town, another asking for a cup of sack, and a third bawling out for a coach, he observed a green parrot perched, in a thoughtful manner, at a distance, upon the foot of a table. "And so you, my brave gentleman," said he, "are quite silent?" To which the parrot replied, like a philosophical bird, "I think the more." Pleased with this sensible answer, our widower immediately paid down his price, and took home the bird, conceiving great things from a creature which had given so striking a specimen of his parts.

After having instructed him, however, during a whole month, he found, to his great disappointment, that he could get nothing more from him than the fatiguing repetition of the same dull sentence: "I think the more."—"I find," said he, in great wrath, "that thou art a most invincible fool: and ten times more a fool was I, for having formed a favourable opinion of thy abilities upon no better foundation than an affected solemnity."

THE RAT IN RETIREMENT.

THERE liv'd a rat, says Eastern story,
Who made devotion all his glory.
Enamour'd of a quiet life,
And weary of the world,—or wife,
To pass the remnant of his days at ease,
He sought the shelter of a large Dutch cheese:
Seeking therein much more than food,
Retirement, and deep solitude.
He nibbled and scratch'd, and soon work'd himself in,
And he delv'd very deep—for Dutch cheese is not thin;
At the bottom he found it would amply afford—
'Twas all that he wish'd—quiet, lodging, and board.
Settled here at his ease, need I add that the rat,
Having "eaten and worshipp'd," soon grew very "fat"?
It chanced one day, that a legation,
Deputed by the rattish nation,
To sue for succour and supplies
In foreign parts, from their allies,
Demanding alms upon the road,
Sought our secluded saint's abode.
They told the purport of their mission:
Their country's desolate condition;
Invaded by the feline foe,
And want's still wider-wasting woe;
Ratapolis the tabbies leaguer,
They quitt'd it in haste so eager,
That sudden sent without their pay,
The embassy must beg its way.
Small aid they ask'd, for Heaven be praised,
The siege, they said, would soon be raised.
"My friends," replied our devotee,
"The world and its concerns affect not me:
We long since parted;
Yet let me not be thought hard-hearted;
I give to misery all I have, a prayer—
And hope high Heaven may make you much its care!
What can a solitary pauper more?"
He spoke—and speaking, closed the door.
Whose is this image, reader? can you guess?
"A monk's, I ween."—What! rich and pitiless?
A monk slight the poor! Oh no; 'tis a dervise!
A monk we all know, would have render'd 'em service.



THE RAT IN RETIREMENT.

THE BEAR, THE APE AND THE HOG.

A BEAR, by whom a travelling train,
A scanty pittance used to gain,
Puffed up with vanity and pride,
The art of others would deride,
And thought, as he had been in France,
No one like him could skip and dance.
Roused by some sprightly notes, he reared
His ponderous form, nor censure feared;
But called the ape to mark at will,
His might, agility, and skill;
When lo! the ape, a sturdy friend,
Refused his antics to commend.
The bear at this took great offence,
And called it spleen, and want of sense.
Daring him boldly, face to face,
To caper with such air and grace;
Nay, challenged all the lookers on
To do the feats that he had done!
Amazed all stood and mute;—at length
A servile hog, who knew his strength,
Admired his steps, his shape and mien,
And swore such skill he ne'er had seen.
On hearing this the stately bear,
Assumed a more important air,
And raising high his shaggy crest,
Aloud the populace addrest.
"Sirs, when the surly ape refused
To praise my parts, I own I mused,
Lest him more skilful you might deem,
And me but great in self-esteem;
Yet since the hog, in merit's cause
Has honoured me with his applause,
His words have fixed my future fame,
And dance I will, though fools may blame."

THE DOG AND HIS RELATIONS.

KEEPER was a farmer's mastiff, honest, brave, and vigilant. One day as he was ranging at some distance from home, he espied a wolf and a fox sitting together at the corner of a wood. Keeper, not much liking their looks, though by no means fearing them, was turning another way, which when they observed they called after him, and civilly desired him to stay. "Surely, sir," said Renard, "you won't disown your relations. My cousin Ghaunt and I were just talking over family matters, and we both agreed that we had the honour of reckoning you

among our kin. You must know that, according to the best accounts, the wolves and dogs were originally one race in the forests of Armenia; but the dogs, taking to living with man, have since become inhabitants of towns and villages, while the wolves have retained their ancient mode of life. As to my ancestors, the foxes, they were a branch of the same family who settled further northwards, where they became stinted in growth, and adopted the custom of living in holes under ground. The cold has sharpened our noses, and given us a thicker fur and bushy tails to keep us warm, But we have all a family likeness, which it is impossible to mistake; and I am sure it is our interest to be good friends with each other."

The wolf was of the same opinion; and Keeper, looking narrowly at them, could not help acknowledging their relationship. As he had a generous heart, he readily entered into friendship with them. They took a ramble together; but Keeper was rather surprised at observing the suspicious shyness with which some of the weaker sort of animals surveyed them, and wondered at the hasty flight of a flock of sheep as soon as they came within view. However, he gave his cousins a cordial invitation to come and see him at his yard, and then took his leave.

They did not fail to come the next day about dusk. Keeper received them kindly, and treated them with part of his own supper. They staid with him till after dark, and then marched off with many compliments. The next morning word was brought to the farm that a goose and three goslings were missing, and that a couple of lambs were found almost devoured in the home-field. Keeper was too honest himself readily to suspect others, so he never thought of his kinsmen on this occasion. Soon after, they paid him a second evening visit, and next day another loss appeared, of a hen and her chickens, and a fat sheep. Now Keeper could not help mistrusting a little, and blamed himself for admitting strangers without his master's knowledge. However, he still did not love to think ill of his own relations.

They came a third time. Keeper received them rather coldly, and hinted that he should like better to see them in the day-time; but they excused themselves for want of leisure. When they took their leave, he resolved to follow and watch their motions. A litter of young pigs happened to be lying under a haystack without the yard. The wolf seized one by the back and ran off with him. The pig set up a most dismal squall; and Keeper, running up at the noise, caught his dear cousin in the fact. He flew at him, and made him relinquish his prey, though not without much snarling and growling. The fox, who had been prowling about the hen-roost, now came up, and began to make protestations of his own innocence, with heavy reproaches against the wolf for thus disgracing the family. "Begone, scoundrels, both!" cried Keeper, "I know you now too well. You may be of my blood, but I am sure you are not of my spirit. Keeper holds no kindred with villains." So saying, he drove them from the premises.

THE KID AND THE WOLF.

A KID mounted upon the roof of a shed, and seeing a wolf below, loaded him with reproaches. Upon which the wolf, looking up, replied: "Do not value yourself, vain creature, on thinking you mortify me, for I look upon this ill language as not coming from you, but from the place which protects you."

THE ONE-EYED DOE.

A DOE, that had but one eye, used to graze near the sea; and that she might be the more secure from harm, she kept her blind side towards the water, from whence she had no apprehension of danger, and with the other surveyed the country as she fed. By this vigilance and precaution she thought herself in the utmost security, when a sly fellow, with two or three of his companions, who had been poaching after her for several days to no purpose, at last took a boat, and fetching a compass, came gently down upon and shot her. The doe, in the agonies of death, breathed out this doleful complaint: "O hard fate! that I should receive my death-wound from that side whence I expected no ill, and be safe in the part where I looked for the most danger."

Life is so full of accidents and uncertainties, that, with all the precaution we use, we can never be said to be entirely free from danger. We may guard against the most visible and threatening ills, as much as we please, but shall still leave an unguarded side to a thousand latent mischiefs, which lie around us. The moral, which such a reflection suggests to us, is to be neither too secure, nor too solicitous about the safety of our persons; as it is impossible for us to be always out of danger, so would it be unreasonable and unmanly to be always in fear of that which it is not in our power to prevent.

THE TWO DOGS.

"How greatly our race has degenerated!" said a travelled poodle. "In a remote quarter of the globe which men call India, dogs are still found of the right sort; dogs, my friend, you will scarcely credit me, and yet I have seen it with my own eyes, which are not afraid of a lion, and will even attack him in the boldest manner possible!"

"But," said a sedate pointer to the poodle, "do they overcome the lion?"

"Overcome him?" was the answer, "why, I can't exactly pretend to say, Nevertheless, only think, to attack a lion!"

"Oh!" pursued the pointer, "if they don't overcome him, your boasted dogs in India are no better than we: though undoubtedly they are infinitely more stupid."

THE MULE.

A MULE, which was well fed and worked little, grew fat and wanton, and frisked about very notably. "And why should not I run as well as the best of them?" said he, "it is well known I had a horse for my father, and a very good racer he was." Soon after this his master took him out, and being upon urgent business, whipped and spurred the mule to make it put forward: who beginning to tire upon the road, changed his note, and said to himself: "Ah! but where is the horse's blood I boasted but now? I am sorry to say it, but indeed my worthy sire must have been an ass, and not a horse."

THE FLYING-FISH.

THE flying-fish had originally no wings, but being of an ambitious and discontented temper, she repined at being always confined to the waters, and wished to soar in the air. "If I could fly like the birds," said she, "I should not only see more of the beauties of Nature, but should be able to escape from those fish which are continually pursuing me, and which render my life miserable." She therefore petitioned Jupiter for a pair of wings; and immediately she perceived her fins to expand. They suddenly grew to the length of her whole body, and became at the same time so strong as to do the office of a pinion. She was at first much pleased with her new powers, and looked with an air of disdain on all her former companions; but she soon perceived herself exposed to new dangers. When flying in the air, she was incessantly pursued by the tropic bird, and the albatross; and when for safety she dropped into the water, she was so fatigued with her flight, that she was less able than ever to escape from her old enemies the fish. Finding herself more unhappy than before, she now begged of Jupiter to recal his present; but Jupiter said to her: "When I gave you your wings, I well knew they would prove a curse; but your proud and restless disposition deserved this disappointment. Now, therefore, what you begged as a favour keep as a punishment."

THE LITTLE DOG.

"WHAT shall I do," said a very little dog one day to his mother, "to shew my gratitude to our good master, and make myself of some value to him? I cannot draw or carry burdens like the horse; nor give him milk like the cow; nor lend him my covering for his clothing like the sheep; nor produce him eggs like the poultry; nor catch mice and rats so well as the cat. I cannot divert him with singing like the canaries and linnets; nor can I defend him against robbers like our relation, Towzer; I should not be of use to him even if I were dead, as the hogs are. I am a poor insignificant creature, not worth the cost of keeping; and I don't see that I can do a single thing to entitle me to his regard." So saying, the poor little dog hung down his head in silent despondency.

"My dear child," replied his mother, "though your abilities are but small, yet a hearty good-will is sufficient to supply all defects. Do but love him dearly, and prove your love by all the means in your power, and you will not fail to please him."

The little dog was comforted by this assurance; and, on his master's approach, ran to him, licked his feet, gambolled before him, and every now and then stopped, wagging his tail, and looking up to his master with expressions of the most humble and affectionate attachment. The master observed him. "Ah! little Fido," said he, "you are an honest, good-natured little fellow!" and stooped down to pat his head. Poor Fido was ready to go out of his wits for joy.

Fido was now his master's constant companion in his walks, playing and skipping round him, and amusing him by a thousand sportive tricks. He took care, however, not to be troublesome by leaping on him with dirty paws, nor would he

follow him into the parlour, unless invited. He also attempted to make himself useful by a number of little services. He would drive away the sparrows as they were stealing the chickens' meat; and would run and bark with the utmost fury at any strange pigs or other animals that offered to come into the yard. He kept the poultry, geese, and pigs from straying beyond their bounds and particularly from doing mischief in the garden. He was always ready to alarm Towzer if there was any suspicious noise about the house, day or night. If his master pulled off his coat in the field to help his workman, as he would sometimes do, Fido always sat by it, and would not suffer either man or beast to touch it. By this means he came to be considered as a very trusty protector of his master's property.

His master was once confined to his bed with a dangerous illness. Fido planted himself at the chamber-door, and could not be persuaded to leave it even to take food; and as soon as his master was so far recovered as to sit up, Fido, being admitted into the room, ran up to him with such marks of excessive joy and affection, as would have melted any heart to behold. This circumstance wonderfully endeared him to his master: and some time after, he had an opportunity of doing him a very important service. One hot day, after dinner, his master was sleeping in a summer-house, with Fido by his side. The building was old and crazy; and the dog, who was faithfully watching his master, perceived the walls shake, and pieces of mortar fall from the ceiling. He comprehended the danger, and began barking to awaken his master; and this not sufficing, he jumped up, and gently bit his finger. The master, upon this started up, and had just time to get out of the door before the whole building fell down. Fido, who was behind, got hurt by some rubbish which fell upon him: on which his master had him taken care of with the utmost tenderness, and ever afterwards acknowledged his obligation to this little animal as the preserver of his life. Thus his love and fidelity had their full reward.

The poorest man may repay his obligations to the richest and greatest by faithful and affectionate service:—the meanest creature may obtain the favour and regard of the Creator himself, by humble gratitude, and steadfast obedience

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THE MISER AND THE MAGPIE.

As a miser sat at his desk, counting over his heaps of gold, a magpie eloping from his cage, picked up a guinea, and hopped away with it. The miser, who never failed to count his money a second time, immediately missed a piece, and rising up from his seat in the utmost consternation, observed the felon hiding it in a crevice of the floor. "And art thou," cried he, "that worst of thieves, who hast robbed me of my gold, without the plea of necessity, and without regard to to its proper use? But thy life shall atone for so preposterous a villany."—"Soft words, good master," quoth the magpie. "Have I then injured you in any other sense than you defraud the public? and am I not using your money in the same manner you do yourself? if I must lose my life for hiding a single guinea, what do you, I pray, deserve, who secrete so many thousands."

THE CUCKOO.

One day a cuckoo, in his flights up and down,
Fell in with a starling escaping from town:
"Pray, what is the talk?" he began with an air;
"Pray, how do they speak of our songs in the city;
Pray, what do they think of the nightingale there?"—
"The whole of the town is in love with her ditty."—
"And pray, what remark do they pass on the lark?"—
"She's high in renown with the half of the town."—
"Indeed! well, and as to the blackbird?"—"He too,
Is eulogised much, here and there, by a few."—
"Well, now I've to add, that I'd feel very glad
If you'd tell me the various opinions that go forth,
Respecting *myself*, and my merits, and so forth?"—
"Why that," said the starling, "I hardly can do,
For scarcely a soul ever talks about you."—
"Base ingrates!—well then, as they grant me no praise,
I'll trumpet myself to the end of my days."
So saying away to the forest he flew,
And ever since then has been crying '*Cuckoo!*'

THE ASS, THE LION, AND THE COCK.

An ass and a cock happened to be feeding in the same place, when on a sudden they spied a lion approaching them. This beast is reported, above all things to have an antipathy to the crowing of a cock; so that he no sooner heard the voice of that bird, than he betook him to his heels, and ran away as fast as he could. The ass, thinking he had fled for fear of him, in the bravery of his heart pursued him, and followed him so far that they were quite out of hearing of the cock; which the lion no sooner perceived, but he turned about and seized the ass; and just as he was ready to tear him in pieces, the sluggish creature is said to have expressed himself thus: "Alas! fool that I was, knowing the cowardice of my own nature, thus by an affected courage to throw myself into the jaws of death, when I might have remained secure and unmolested."

There are many who, out of ambition to appear considerable, affect to shew themselves men of fire, spirit and courage: but these being qualities of which they are not the right owners, they generally expose themselves, and shew the little title they have to them, by endeavouring to exert and produce them at unseasonable times, or with improper persons. A bully, for fear you should find him out to be a coward, overacts his part, and calls you to account for affronts which a man of true bravery would never have thought of. And a cowardly, silly fellow, observing that he may take some liberties with impunity, where perhaps the place or the company protects him, falsely concludes, that the person with whom he made free is a greater coward than himself; so that he not only continues his offensive raillery and impertinence for the present, but probably renews them in a place not so privileged as the former, where his insolence meets with due chastisement; than which nothing is more equitable in itself, or agreeable to the discreet part of mankind.

THE HOUNDS IN COUPLES.

A HUNTSMAN was leading forth his hounds one morning to the chase, and had linked several of the young dogs in couples, to prevent their following every scent and hunting disorderly, as their own inclinations and their fancy should direct them. Among others it was the fate of Jowler and Vixen to be thus yoked together. These hounds were both young and inexperienced; but had for some time been constant companions, and seemed to have entertained a great fondness for each other; they used to be perpetually playing together; and in any quarrel that happened, always took one another's part. It might have been expected, therefore, that it would not be disagreeable to them to be still more closely united. However, in fact, it proved otherwise; they had not been long joined together, before both parties were observed to express uneasiness at their situation. Different inclinations and opposite wills began to discover and exert themselves. If one chose to go this way, the other was as eager to take the contrary road; if one was pressing forward, the other was sure to lag behind; Vixen pulled back Jowler, and Jowler dragged along Vixen; Jowler growled at Vixen, and Vixen snapped at Jowler; till at last it came to a downright quarrel between them; and Jowler treated Vixen in a very rough and ungenerous manner, without any regard to the inferiority of her strength, or the tenderness of her sex. As they were thus continually vexing and tormenting each other, an old hound, who had observed all that had passed, came up to them, and thus reproved them: "What a couple of silly puppies you are, to be perpetually worrying yourselves at this rate! what hinders your going on peaceably and quietly together? cannot you compromise the matter between you, by each consulting the other's inclination a little? at least, try to make a virtue of necessity, and submit to what you cannot remedy; you cannot get rid of the chain, but may make it sit easy upon you. I am an old dog, and let my age and experience instruct you. When I was in the same circumstances with you, I soon found, that thwarting my companion was only tormenting myself; and my yoke-fellow happily came into the same way of thinking. We endeavoured to join in the same pursuits, and to follow one another's inclination; and so we jogged on together, not only with ease and quiet, but with comfort and pleasure. We found by experience that mutual compliance not only compensates for liberty, but is even attended with a satisfaction and delight beyond what liberty itself can give."

MINERVA'S CHOICE.

"THE gods," say the heathen mythologists, "have each of them a favourite tree." Jupiter preferred the oak, Venus the myrtle, and Phœbus the laurel; Cybele the pine, and Hercules the poplar. Minerva, surprised that they should choose barren trees, asked Jupiter the reason. "It is," said he, "to prevent any suspicion that we confer the honour we do upon them from an interested motive." —"Let folly suspect what it pleases," returned Minerva; "I shall not scruple to acknowledge that I make choice of the olive for the usefulness of its fruit."— "O daughter!" replied the father of the gods, "it is with justice that men esteem you wise; for nothing is truly valuable that is not useful."

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

A fox, who having failed to pick,
Though prowling all around the village,
The bones of goose, or duck, or chick,
Was bent on any sort of pillage,

Saw from a trellis hanging high,
Some grapes with purple bloom inviting;
His jaws with heat and hunger dry,
The luscious fruit would fain be biting.

His carcase than a weasel thinner,
Made him for every prize alert;
He thought, though fortune brought no dinner,
'Twas best secure a good dessert.

A tantalizing branch to gain,
With many a spring and many a bound,
He strove; but finding all in vain,
With this remark he quits the ground:

"Let those who like such trash devour,
I'll range elsewhere for better prog;
These worthless grapes, so green and sour,
Are scarcely fit to feed a hog!"

Thus placemen, rake, roué are fain,
In game, or love, or office failing,
To turn from what they can't obtain,
And vent their spleen in jest-like railing.

THE SPANIEL AND THE MASTIFF.

Hasty and inconsiderate connections are generally attended with great disadvantages; and much of every man's good or ill-fortune depends upon the choice he makes of his friends.

A good-natured spaniel overtook a surly mastiff, as he was travelling upon the road. Tray, although an entire stranger to Tiger, very civilly accosted him. And if it would be no interruption, he said, he should be glad to bear him company on his way. Tiger, who happened not to be altogether in so growling a mood as usual, accepted the proposal, and they very amicably pursued their journey together. In the midst of their conversation they arrived at the next village, where Tiger began to display his malignant disposition, by an unprovoked attack upon every dog he met. The villagers immediately sallied forth with great indignation to rescue their respective favourites, and falling upon our two friends without distinction or mercy, poor Tray was most cruelly treated, for no other reason but his being found in bad company.



THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

THE PARROT AND HIS CAGE.

A PARROT, belonging to a person of quality, was fed every day with plenty of dainties, and kept in a stately cage, which was set abroad upon a marble table in the garden, that he might enjoy the light of the sky, and the freshness of the air to the best advantage. His master, and all the family, when they talked to him, used the most tender, fond expressions, and the disorder of his feathers was smoothed with kindly touches by the fair hand of his lady: yet, notwithstanding this happy situation, he was uneasy, and envied the condition of those birds which lived free in the wilderness, hopping unconfined, from bough to bough. He earnestly longed to lead the same life, and secretly pined with grief, because his wishes were denied him. After some time, however, it happened that the door of his cage was left unfastened, and the long wished for opportunity was given him of making an elopement. Accordingly, out he flew, and conveyed himself into a neighbouring wood, where he thought to spend the remainder of his days in content. But, alas! poor Poll was mistaken; a thousand inconveniences, which he had never dreamed of, attended his elopement, and he was now really that miserable creature which before his imagination only made him. He was buffeted by the savage inhabitants of the grove; and his imitation of the human voice, which formerly rendered him so agreeable, did but the more expose him to the fierce resentment of the feathered creation. The delicate food with which he used to be fed was no more; he was unskilled in the ways of providing for himself, and even ready to die with hunger. A storm of rain, thunder and lightning, filled the air, and he had no place to screen or protect him; his feathers were wetted by the heavy shower, and blasted with the flashes of lightning: his tender nature, suited to a milder climate, could not stand the shock: he died under it: but just before he breathed his last, he is said to have made this reflection: "Ah, poor Poll! were you but in your cage again, you would never wander more."

This Fable may be a proper lesson to those who are possessed with a rambling spirit, and are fond of trying experiments. People may have felt imaginary inconveniences at home; but as they have been used to live in dependance upon others, let them but go abroad, and try to shift for themselves, and they will, in all probability, soon feel real miseries.

THE TWO HORSES.

Two horses were travelling the road together; one loaded with a sack of flour, the other with a sum of money. The latter, proud of his splendid burden, tossed up his head with an air of conscious superiority, and every now and then cast a look of contempt upon his humble companion. In passing through a wood, they were met by a gang of highwaymen, who immediately seized upon the horse that was carrying the treasure; but the spirited steed not being altogether disposed to stand so quietly as was necessary for their purpose, they beat him most unmercifully; and, after plundering him of his boasted load, left him to lament at his leisure the cruel bruises he had received.—"Friend," said his despised companion to him, who had now reason to triumph in his turn, "distinguished posts are often dangerous to those who possess them. If you had served a miller as I do, you might have travelled the road unmolested."

THE RIVER FISH AND THE SEA FISH.

THE waters of a river being mightily swollen by a great flood, the stream ran down with a violent current, and by its rapid force carried a huge barbel along with it into the sea. This fresh-water spark was no sooner come into a new climate, than he began to give himself airs, to talk big, and look with contempt upon the inhabitants of the place; he boasted that he was of better family and country than any among them, for which reason they ought to give place to him and pay him respect accordingly. A fine large mullet, that happened to swim near him, and heard his insolent language, bade him hold his silly tongue, for if they should be taken by the fishermen and carried to market, he would soon be convinced who ought to have the preference. "We," said he, "should be bought up at any price for the tables of the first quality, and you sold to the poor for little or nothing."

It proceeds from a want either of sense or breeding, or both, when foreigners speak slightly of the country they happen to be in, and cry up their own. It is, indeed, natural to have an affection for one's own native place, nor can we, perhaps, help preferring it to any other; but it is certainly both imprudent and unmannerly to express this in any other country, to people whose opinions it must needs contradict, by the same rule that it pleases our own.

MEROPS.

"I WISH to ask you a question;" said a young eagle to a thoughtful and very studious owl.

"It is said there is a bird called Merops, which, when it rises into the air, flies with the tail first, and the head looking down to the earth. Is it a fact?"

"By no means," said the owl; "it is only a silly fiction of mankind. Man is himself a sort of Merops; for he would most willingly soar towards Heaven without losing sight of the world for a single instant."

JUPITER'S LOTTERY.

JUPITER, in order to please mankind, directed Mercury to give notice that he had established a lottery, in which there were no blanks, and that, among a variety of other useful chances, Wisdom was the highest prize. It was Jupiter's command, that in this lottery some of the gods should also become adventurers. The tickets being disposed of, and the wheels placed, Mercury was employed to preside at the drawing. It happened that the best prize fell to Minerva, upon which a general murmur ran through the assembly, and hints were thrown out that Jupiter had used unfair practices to secure this valuable lot to his daughter. Jupiter, that he might at once both punish and silence these impious clamours of the human race, presented them with Folly in the place of Wisdom, with which they went away perfectly contented. And from that time the greatest fools have always looked upon themselves as the wisest men.

THE BOY AND HIS MOTHER.

A LITTLE boy, who went to school, stole one of his school-fellows' horn-books, and brought it home to his mother, who; so far from correcting and discouraging him for the theft, commended and gave him an apple for his pains. In time, as the child grew up, he accustomed himself to greater robberies, and at last, being apprehended and committed to gaol, he was tried and condemned for felony. On the day of his execution, as the officers were conducting him to the gallows, he was attended by a vast crowd of people, and among the rest his mother, who came sighing and sobbing for her son's unhappy fate, which the criminal observing, called to the sheriff, and begged that he would give him leave to speak a word or two to her. The sheriff, as who would deny a dying man so reasonable a request, gave him permission; and the felon, while every one thought he was whispering something of importance to his mother, bit off her ear, to the great offence and surprise of the whole assembly. "What!" said they, "was not this villain contented with the impious acts he has already committed, but he must increase their number by doing this violence to his mother?"—"Good people," replied he, "I would not have you be under a mistake; that wicked woman deserves this, and even worse at my hands; for if she had chastised instead of caressing me, when in my infancy I stole the horn-book from the school, I had not come to this ignominious and untimely end."

Notwithstanding the innate depravity of mankind, one need not scruple to affirm that most of the wickedness, which is so frequent and pernicious in the world, arises from a bad education; and that the child is obliged either to the example or connivance of its parents for most of the vicious habits which it wears through the course of its future life. The mind of one that is young is like wax, soft and capable of any impression which is given it; but it is hardened by time, and the first signature grows so firm and durable, that scarcely any pains or application can erase it. It is a mistaken notion in people, when they imagine that there is no occasion for regulating or restraining the actions of very young children, which though allowed sometimes to be very naughty, if not criminal, in those of a more advanced age, are in them, they suppose, altogether innocent and inoffensive. But, however innocent they may be as to their intention then, yet as the practice may grow upon them unobserved, and root itself into a habit, they ought to be checked and discountenanced in their first efforts towards anything that is injurious or dishonest; that the love of virtue, and the abhorrence of wrong and oppression, may be let into their minds, at the same time that they receive the very first dawn of understanding and glimmering of reason. Whatever guilt arises from the actions of one whose education has been deficient on this point, no question but a just share of it will be laid by the great Judge of the world to the charge of those who were, or should have been his instructors.

THE OSTRICH.

"Now, I am going to fly!" cried the gigantic ostrich, and the whole concourse of the birds assembled round him in grave expectation. "Now I am going to fly," he again exclaimed, and expanding his mighty wings, darted, like a ship in full sail, along the ground, without losing a single step.

Thus it is with those poetical geniuses, who, at the commencement of an enormous ode, boast of being about to soar above both clouds and stars, and remain faithful to their parent dust!

THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

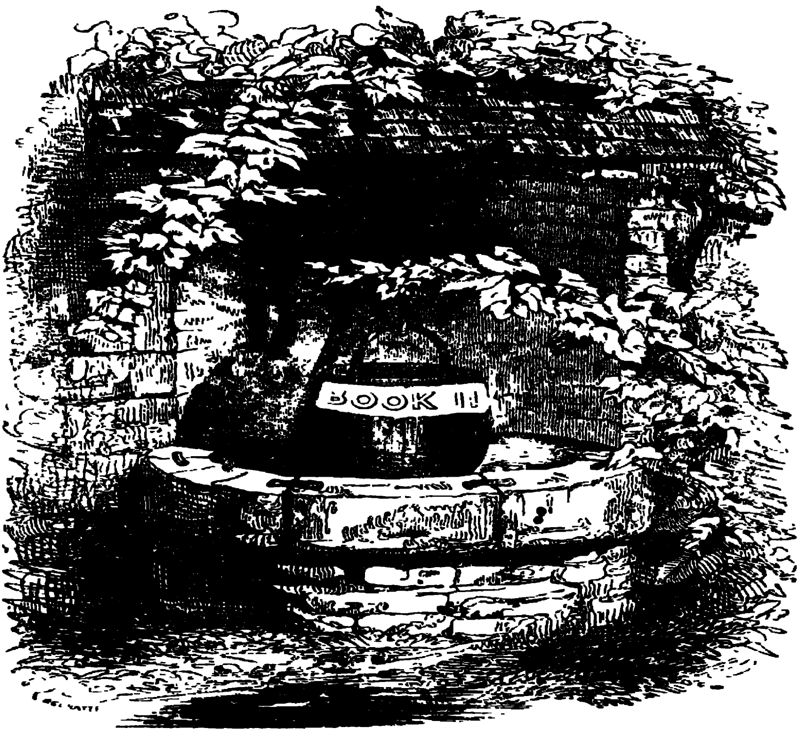
We can never be too carefully on our guard against a connection with persons of ill character.

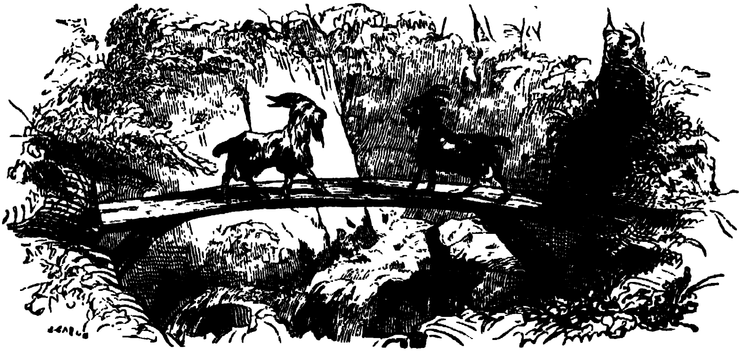
As a dog was coursing the banks of the Nile, he grew thirsty; but, fearing to be seized by the monsters of that river, he would not stop to satisfy his drought, but lapped as he ran. A crocodile, raising his head above the surface of the water, asked him why he was in such a hurry? "I have often," he said, "wished for your acquaintance, and should be glad to embrace the present opportunity to make it."—"You do me great honour," returned the dog; "but it is to avoid such companions as you that I am in so much haste."

THE GOAT AND THE VINE.

A goat, that by huntsmen was very hard press'd,
Crouched under a vine, and lay close down to rest;
But, as soon as he thought that his danger was over,
Fell to browse on the leaves that afforded him cover.-
The rustling was heard, and the huntsmen repair
Again to the vineyard, to search with more care.
Master goat, being found, is now kill'd for his pains,
But, ere he expires, he thus sadly complains:
"This death, I must own, is not more than my due,
Who e'n to my guardian and self proved untrue!"




BOOK II



FABLES.

BOOK II.

THE BEE AND THE GRASSHOPPER.



ET a person be possessed of the highest talents and attainments, he will find them of little real service to him without good temper and discretion.

A bee, observing a grasshopper frisking about on the green sward before her hive, asked him in a very passionate tone, what he did there? "Is it for such scoundrels as you," said she, "to intrude into the company of the queens of the air?"—"You have great reason, truly," replied the grasshopper, "to be out of humour. I am sure they must be mad, who would have any concern with so quarrelsome a nation."—"And why so, saucy malapert?" returned the enraged bee; "we have the best laws, and are governed by the best policy in the world. We feed upon the most fragrant flowers, and our business is to make honey; honey, which equals nectar, thou tasteless wretch, who livest on nothing but the vilest produce of the earth."—"We live as we can," rejoined the grasshopper. "Poverty, I hope, is no crime; but passion is one, I am sure. The honey you make, is sweet, I grant you; but your heart is all bitterness; for to be revenged on an enemy, you will destroy your own life; and are so inconsiderate in your rage, as to do more mischief to yourself than to your adversary."

THE FLINT AND THE STEEL.

NATURE and art should help each other;
As father, son: as sister, brother:
Genius from wisdom aid requires,
To guide his pen, and fan his fires;
And science pleases most, when joined
With polished manners, taste refined.
Thus wit and judgment were by Heaven,
Each for the other's succour given;
And long together, void of strife,
Should ever dwell, like man and wife.
Who then the world would fain delight,
With genius learning should unite;
For fancy often fails to gain
What she, with knowledge, might attain.—
Of pride and insolence possest,
An angry flint a steel address'd?
"How comes it sir, without my aid,
That thou an useless thing, art made?
For though fair Betty's hand with skill
Strike me against thy ribs at will,
From me alone to check her ire,
Proceeds the spark that kindles fire.
But not to this my power's confined;
I please the eager sportsman's mind,
As through the tube with deadly aim,
I speed the shot that kills the game;
Whilst thou, forsooth, canst nought produce,
That tends to toiling mortals' use."
Awhile the steel, with inward pain,
Allow'd his comrade to complain;
But urg'd to speak, he coolly said:
"Since useless you conceive me made,
(No malice bearing at my heart)
Suppose we live awhile apart,
My wishes to the act incline,
You take your course and I'll take mine."
Enraged, the flint approved the deed;
And lo! to part they straight agreed.
But what will not experience prove!
The flint soon found in vain he strove
To charm alone his sporting friend;
So deemed his triumph at an end;
And Betty, who no flame could raise,
No more was noisy in his praise.

Thus, conscious of his fault he mourned,
And to his injured mate returned,
Whom he discovered on a shelf,
As much neglected as himself;
And having there confessed with shame,
How greatly they were both to blame,
They quell'd their broils with ready art,
And swore they never more would part.

THE ENVIOUS MAN AND THE COVETOUS.

An envious man happened to offer up his prayers to Jupiter, just in the same time and place with a covetous, miserable fellow. Jupiter, not caring to be troubled with their impertinences himself, sent Apollo to examine the merits of their petitions, and to give them such relief as he should think proper. Apollo therefore opened his commission, and told them that to make short of the matter, whatever the one asked, the other should have it double. Upon this, the covetous man, though he had a thousand things to request, yet forbore to ask first, hoping to receive a double quantity, for he concluded that all men's wishes sympathized with his. By this means, the envious man had an opportunity of preferring his petition first, which was the thing he aimed at; so, without much hesitation, he prayed to be relieved, by having one of his eyes put out, knowing that of consequence, his companion would be deprived of both.

THE GEESE AND THE CRANES.

A flock of geese and a parcel of cranes used often to feed together in a cornfield. At last, the owner of the corn and his servants, coming upon them of a sudden, surprised them in the very fact; and the geese, being heavy, fat, full-bodied creatures, were most of them sufferers; but the cranes, being thin and light, easily flew away.

When the enemy comes to make a seizure, they are sure to suffer most who are the richest and fattest. In any case of persecution, money hangs like a dead weight about a man, and we never feel gold so heavy as when we endeavour to make off with it. Therefore, wise and politic ministers of State, whenever they see a storm begin to gather over their heads, always take care to unlade themselves of a good part of their cargo; and, by this means, seldom find but the blasts of obloquy, through which they are to make their way, are less deaf and inexorable than the stormy waves of the ocean. Indeed, poverty is too frequently the occasion of men's being treated as if they were guilty of the greatest crimes and reproaches; but then, these sort of criminals have this advantage, that no one thinks fit to treat them with anything worse than contempt; whereas, if any pretence can be found to fall upon the rich man, it is a miracle if he escapes with both life and money. In short, riches are like the baggage of an army, very useful while we lie in quiet possession of the camp, or are powerful enough to defy the enemy; but when once we are put to the rout, if we would get off with our lives and liberties, we must quit our baggage as soon as possible, and leave it for plunder to our pursuers. Nay, however strongly intrenched we may think ourselves, as long as money is in the case, it is good to look about us for fear of a surprise; for, after all, he that does not, upon occasion, make himself wings with his riches to fly off with, deserves to be punished, like a goose as he is, for his heaviness.

THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

The horse, adorned with his war-saddle, and champing his foaming bit, came thundering along the way, and made the mountains echo with his loud shrill neighing. He had not gone far before he overtook an ass, who was labouring under a heavy burden, and moving slowly on in the same track with himself. He immediately called out to him in a haughty imperious tone, and threatened to trample him in the dirt, if he did not break the way for him. The poor, patient ass, not daring to dispute the matter, quietly got out of the way as fast as he could, and let him go by. Not long after this, the same horse, in an engagement with the enemy, happened to be shot in the eye, which made him unfit for show, or any military business; so he was stripped of his fine ornaments, and sold to a carrier. The ass meeting him in this forlorn condition, thought that now it was his time to insult; and so, says he, "Hey-day, friend, is it you? Well, I always believed that pride of yours would one day have a fall."

Pride is a very unaccountable vice. Many people fall into it unawares, and are often led into it by motives which, if they considered things rightly, would make them abhor the very thoughts of it. There is no man that thinks well of himself, but desires the rest of the world should think so too. Now it is the wrong measures we take in endeavouring after this, that expose us to discerning people in that light which we call pride, and which is so far from giving us any advantage in their esteem, that it renders us despicable and ridiculous. It is an affectation of appearing considerable that puts men upon being proud and insolent; and their very being so makes them infallibly little and inconsiderable. The man that claims and calls for reverence and respect, deserves none; he that acts for applause is sure to lose it: the certain way to get it is to seem to shun it, and the humble man according to the maxims even of this world, is the most likely to be exalted. He that, in his words or actions, pleads for superiority, and rather chooses to do an ill action than condescend to do a good one, acts like the horse, and is as void of reason and understanding. The rich and the powerful want nothing but the love and esteem of mankind to complete their felicity; and these they are sure to obtain by a good-humoured, kind condescension; and are as certain of being everybody's aversion, whilst the least tincture of overbearing rudeness is perceptible in their words or actions. What brutal tempers must they be of, who can be easy and indifferent while they know themselves to be universally hated, though in the midst of affluence and power! But this is not all; for if ever the wheel of Fortune should whirl them from the top to the bottom, instead of friendship or commisseration, they will meet with nothing but contempt, and that, with much more justice than ever they themselves exerted it towards others.

WASPS IN A HONEY-POT.

A swarm of wasps were one day got
Together in a honey-pot,
Where feasting they so long remain,
That they could not get out again;
And thus, they quickly came to know
That, for their luxuries, life must go.

Pleasures, when they've habitual grown,
Can't easily be let alone,
Till, like the wasps, the sensualist's undone



THE IRON POT AND THE EARTHEN POT.

THE IRON POT AND THE EARTHEN POT.

A VILLAGE streamlet was swollen by the heavy spring showers to the size and fury of a torrent. An iron pot and one of earth, which had been left on its brink were carried away by the flood. The earthen pot, being brought, every few minutes, by the whirling violence of the waters, in contact with her neighbour, began to express her uneasiness and apprehension. The iron pot robustly bade her entertain no alarm, assuring her that he would take care of, and prevent her being dashed against the stones when they should come to a shallower spot. "Nay, nay," replied the earthen vessel beseechingly, "I entreat you to keep as far from me as possible. It is you that I am most afraid of; for, whether the stream dashes me against you, or you against me, I am sure to be the sufferer. All I crave, is, that we may be permitted not to come near each other."

A man of moderate fortune, who can live comfortably upon what he has, should take care not to hazard his happiness by consorting with the great and powerful. People of equal condition may float down the current of life without hurting each other, but it is a much more difficult point to steer one's course in the company of the great so as to escape without injury. Who would choose to have his country-box situated in the neighbourhood of a very great man? since whether I ignorantly trespass upon him, or he knowingly encroach upon me, I only am likely to be the sufferer. I can neither entertain nor play with him upon his own terms; for that which is moderation and diversion to him, in me would be extravagance and ruin.

PYTHAGORAS AND THE CRITIC.

PYTHAGORAS was very earnestly engaged in taking an exact measure of the Olympic course. One of those conceited critics who aim at everything, and are ready to interpose with their opinion upon all subjects, happened to be present; and could not help smiling to himself to see the philosopher so employed, and to observe what great attention and pains he bestowed upon such business. "And pray," said he, accosting Pythagoras, "may I presume to ask with what design you have given yourself this trouble?"—"Of that," replied the philosopher, "I shall very readily inform you. We are assured that Hercules, when he instituted the Olympic games, himself laid out the course by measure, and determined it to the length of six hundred feet, measuring it by the standard of his own foot. Now, by taking an exact measure of this space, and seeing how much it exceeds the measure of the same number of feet now in use, we can find how much the foot of Hercules, and, in proportion, his whole stature exceeded that of the present generation."—"A very curious speculation," said the critic, "and of great use and importance, no doubt; and so you will demonstrate to us, that the bulk of this fabulous hero was equal to his extravagant enterprises and his marvellous exploits. And pray, sir, what may be the result of your enquiry at last? I suppose you can now tell me exactly to a hair's breadth, how tall Hercules was."—"The result of my enquiry," replied the philosopher, "is this; and it is a conclusion of greater use and importance than you seem to expect from it; that if you will always estimate the labours of the philosopher, the designs of the patriot, and the actions of the hero, by the standard of your own narrow conceptions, you will ever be greatly mistaken in your judgment concerning them."

THE DIAMOND AND THE LOADSTONE.

A DIAMOND, of great beauty and lustre, observing not only many other gems of a lower class ranged together with him in the same cabinet, but a loadstone likewise placed not far from him, began to question the latter how he came there, and what pretensions he had to be ranked among the precious stones—he, who appeared to be no better than a mere flint, a sorry, coarse, rusty-looking pebble, without the least shining quality to advance him to such an honour; and concluded with desiring him to keep his distance, and pay a proper respect to his superiors. "I find," said the loadstone, "you judge by external appearances; and it is your interest that others should form their judgment by the same rule. I must own I have nothing to boast of in that respect; but I may venture to say that I make amends for my outward defects, by my inward qualities. The great improvement of navigation in these latter ages is entirely owing to me. It is owing to me, that the distant parts of the world are known and accessible to each other, that the remotest nations are connected together, and all in a manner united into one common society; that by a mutual intercourse they relieve one another's wants, and all enjoy the several blessings peculiar to each. Great Britain is indebted to me for her wealth, her splendour, and her power; and the arts and sciences are in a great measure obliged to me for their late improvements, and their continual increase. I am willing to allow you your due praise in its full extent. You are a very pretty bauble. I am mightily delighted to see you glitter and sparkle. I look upon you with pleasure and surprise. But I must be convinced that you are of some sort of use, before I acknowledge that you have any real merit, or treat you with that respect you seem to demand."

THE LION, THE WOLF, AND THE FOX.

A LION, having surfeited himself with feasting too luxuriously on the carcase of a wild boar, was seized with a violent and dangerous disorder. The beasts of the forest flocked in great numbers to pay their respects to him upon the occasion, and scarcely one was absent but the fox. The wolf, an ill natured and malicious beast, seized this opportunity to accuse the fox of pride, ingratitude, and disaffection to his majesty. In the midst of his invective the fox entered, and, having heard part of the wolf's accusation, and observing the lion's countenance to be kindling into wrath, thus adroitly excused himself, and retorted upon his accuser: "I see many here who with mere lip-service have pretended to shew you their loyalty; but for my part, from the moment I heard of your majesty's illness, neglecting useless compliments, I employed myself day and night to enquire among the most learned physicians an infallible remedy for your disease, and have at length been happily informed of one. It is a plaster made of part of a wolf's skin, taken warm from his back, and laid to your majesty's stomach." This remedy was no sooner proposed, than it was determined the experiment should be tried; and, while the operation was performing, the fox with a sarcastic smile, whispered this useful maxim in the wolf's ear;—"If you would be safe from harm yourself, learn for the future not to meditate mischief against others."

THE REDBREAST AND THE SPARROW.

As a redbreast was singing on a tree, by the side of a rural cottage, a sparrow, perched upon the thatch, took occasion thus to reprimand him. "And dost thou," said he, "with thy dull autumnal note, presume to emulate the birds of spring? Can thy weak warblings pretend to vie with the sprightly accents of the thrush and the blackbird? with the various melody of the lark and the nightingale, whom other birds, far thy superiors, have been long content to admire in silence?"—"Judge with candour, at least," replied the robin; "nor impute those efforts to ambition solely, which may sometimes flow from love of the art. I reverence, indeed, but by no means envy the birds whose fame has stood the test of ages. Their songs have charmed both hill and dale; but their season has past, and their throats are silent. I feel not, however, the ambition to surpass or equal them; my efforts are of a much humbler nature, and I may surely hope for pardon, while I endeavour to cheer these forsaken vallies, by an attempt to imitate the strains I love."

THE FLY IN SAINT PAUL'S CUPOLA.

As a fly was crawling leisurely up one of the columns of Saint Paul's cupola, she often stopped, surveyed, examined, and at last broke forth into the following exclamation: "Strange! that any one who pretends to be an artist, should ever leave so superb a structure with so many roughnesses unfinished!"—"Ah! my friend," said a very learned architect, who hung in his web under one of the capitals, "you should never decide of things beyond the extent of your capacity. This lofty building was not erected for such diminutive animals as you or I, but for a certain sort of creatures, who are at least ten thousand times as large. To their eyes, it is very possible, these columns may seem as smooth as to you appear the wings of your favourite mistress."

THE CAT AND THE BAT.

A CAT, having devoured her master's favourite bullfinch, overheard him threatening to put her to death the moment he could find her. In this distress, she preferred a petition to Jupiter; vowing, if he would deliver her from her present danger, that never while she lived would she eat another bird. Not long afterwards, a bat most invitingly flew into the room where Puss was purring in the window. The question was, how to act upon so trying an occasion: her appetite pressed hard on one side, and her vow threw some scruples in her way on the other. At length she hit upon a most convenient distinction to remove all difficulties, by determining, that as a bird, indeed, it was an unlawful prize, but as a mouse she might very conscientiously eat it; and accordingly, without further debate fell to the repast.

Thus it is that men are apt to impose upon themselves by vain and groundless distinctions, when conscience and principle are at variance with interest and inclination

DEATH AND CUPID.

ONE day, when Sol had well nigh set,
And evening fast was closing in,
Cupid and Death by hazard met
Together, at a country inn.

Death to the north, it seems, was bound,
Love to the south: at either's back
A quiver hung, wherein were found
Their fatal weapons of attack.

Each, as he entered, took his place
And fell to chatting and to quaffing,
Till Love, beholding Death's grim face,
Went almost in a fit for laughing.

At length, he managed to repress
His mirth, and frankly owned its cause,
Begged pardon, but he must confess
He never saw such lantern jaws.

Death fired at this; high words ensued,
And words had shortly turned to blows,
Had not the landlord stayed the feud,
At no small risk to his red nose.

This done, ere long the foes retired,
And soon forgot their wrath in sleep;
But first, the landlord they desired
Under his charge their arms to keep.

It chanced, this worthy, half asleep,
The weapons changed; and so, next morning,
Love's back was helped to Death's grim heap,
And Death's to darts of strange adorning.

Since then alas! it has been found,
That Love seems best with age to thrive;
When life runs low, he deals his wound,
And lights his flame at seventy-five.

Death, on the other hand, strikes those
Whose cheeks are rich with beauty's bloom;
And twenty seems the destined close
Of hearts that least deserve the tomb.

The world is thus turned upside down;
Love aims—and Death is in the blow;
Death fain would kill—his shaft has flown,
And age grows young with Cupid's glow.

THE FOWLER AND THE RING-DOVE.

A FOWLER took his gun, and went into the woods shooting. Among the branches of an oak he spied a ring-dove, and intended to kill it. He clapped the piece to his shoulder, and took his aim accordingly; but just as he was going to pull the trigger, an adder under the grass, which he had trod upon, stung him so painfully in the leg, that he was forced to quit his design, and throw his gun down in a passion. The poison immediately infected his blood, and his whole body began to mortify; which having perceived, he could not help owning it to be just. "Fate," said he, "has brought destruction upon me, while I was contriving the death of another."

This is another lesson against injustice. And if we consider the matter fairly, we must allow it to be as reasonable that some one should do violence to us, as that we should commit it upon another. The unjust man, with a hardened, unfeeling heart, can do a thousand bitter things to others; but if a single calamity touches himself, how insupportable is the uneasiness it occasions! Why should we think others born to hard treatment more than ourselves; or imagine it can be reasonable to do to another what we ourselves should be unwilling to suffer? In our behaviour to all mankind, we need only ask ourselves these plain questions, and our consciences will tell us how to act.

THE STORK AND THE CROW.

A STORK and a crow had once a strong contention, which of them stood highest in the favour of Jupiter. The crow alleged his skill in omens, his infallibility in prophecies, and his great use to the priests of that deity in all their sacrifices and religious ceremonies. The stork urged only his blameless life, the care he took to preserve his offspring, and the assistance he lent his parents under the infirmities of age. It happened, as it generally does in religious disputes, that neither of them could confute the other; so they both agreed to refer the decision to Jupiter himself. On their joint application, the god determined thus between them: "Let none of my creatures despair of my regard. I know their weaknesses. I pity their errors; and whatever is well meant, I accept as it was intended. Yet sacrifices or ceremonies are in themselves of no importance; and every attempt to penetrate the counsel of the gods is altogether as vain as it is presumptuous: but he who pays to Jupiter a just honour and reverence, who leads the most temperate life, and who does the most good in proportion to his abilities, as he best answers the end of his creation, will assuredly stand highest in the favour of his Creator."

THE OX AND THE STAG.

AN unwieldy ox and a nimble stag had their pasture together in the same meadow. "Stag," said the ox, "if the lion should attack us, let us assist each other; we shall keep him off bravely." – "That will never suit me," replied the stag; "why should I engage in an unequal contest with the lion, when my legs enable me so easily to escape from him?"

THE SWORD AND THE SPIT.

A SWORD, in famed Toledo wrought,
That, tempered well, had nobly fought
In many a broil, and chieftains slain,
In various skirmishes in Spain;
From sire to son that long had passed,
Was doomed to feel disgrace at last!
Condemned, its owner in a jail,
To be exposed to public sale!
Thus, though oft drawn, by fate's command,
By many a firm and doughty hand,
It passed, by purchase in a lot,
To one its worth who valued not,
An honest quaker, mild of mien,
With whom it dwelt for months, unseen.
But, lo! it chanced one winter's night,
Anxious his kindred to delight,
Some game he ordered to be dressed,
And, as his spouse no spit possessed,
She, without any more ado,
Ran with the sword the lev'ret through,
And by a casual stroke of wit
The sword converted to a spit.
Now while this transmutation passed,
A new-made lord required in haste
A sword to dangle by his side,
And shew at once his rank and pride.
The wily cutler, who well knew
'Twas meant alone to strike the view,
And that if fine the hilt were made,
The peer would little heed the blade,
Begged a few days in toil to spend,
And he would home the weapon send.—
Meanwhile he searched his kitchen round,
And soon a spit neglected found,
That straight he polished, filed, and gilt,
And on it placed a splendid hilt,
And this, well-sheathed, he sent my lord,
And swore that, on a trader's word,
In all Toledo's city he
A finer sword would never see!
So well he spoke, that in a trice
The silly peer paid down the price,
Which rendered one as vile a cheat,
As was the other's folly great.
'Tis thus translators, servile wits,
Turn spits to swords, and swords to spits.

THE BOY AND THE SNAKE

A BOY was playing with a tame snake. "My dear little creature," said he, "I should not be so familiar with you, had you not been deprived of your venom. You snakes are the most malignant, unthankful reptiles? I well remember reading what happened to a poor countryman, who picked up a snake, (perhaps one of your ancestors) from beneath a hedge, where it lay almost frozen to death, and compassionately put it into his bosom, that it might be restored by the warmth. Scarcely had the wicked creature recovered, than she bit her benefactor; and the good, kind-hearted man gave up the ghost."

"I am astonished," said the snake. "How partial your historians must be! Ours relate this story quite differently. Your kind-hearted countryman thought the snake was really frozen to death; and it being a handsome specimen, he picked it up in order to skin it when he arrived home. Was that correct?"

"Be silent," replied the boy, "what ungrateful wretch ever lacked an excuse?"

"True, my son," interrupted the boy's father, who had been listening to this conversation. "At the same time, whenever you hear of any remarkable instance of ingratitude, examine strictly every circumstance, before branding a person with so ignominious a blemish. True benefactors have seldom conferred favours on the ungrateful; for the honour of mankind I will hope never. But those benefactors possessed with narrow-minded, selfish views, deserve, my son, to meet with ingratitude instead of thankful acknowledgment."

THE ASS AND THE WOLF.

AN ass had the misfortune to be met by a hungry wolf. "Have mercy on me," said the trembling animal; "I am a poor sick beast; look what a great thorn I have run into my foot!"

"Really, you quite grieve me;" replied the wolf. "Conscientiously speaking, I feel myself compelled to put you out of your misery."

He had scarcely spoken, when he tore the supplicating donkey to pieces.

THE WOLF ON HIS DEATH-BED.

A WOLF lay at the last gasp, and glanced at the events of his past life. "True, I am a sinner," said he; "but let me still hope, none of the greatest. I have done harm; but also much good. Once, I remember, a bleating lamb, which had wandered from the flock, came so near me, that I could easily have throttled it; and yet I did nothing to it. At the same time I listened to the jeers and jibes of a sheep with the most surprising indifference, although I had no watchful dogs to fear."

"I can explain all that; interrupted his friend the fox, who was assisting in preparing him for death. "I have a distinct recollection of all the attendant circumstances. It was precisely the time that you so lamentably choked yourself with the bone which the kind-hearted crane afterwards drew out of your throat."

THE ANT AND THE CATERPILLAR.

As a caterpillar was slowly advancing along one of the alleys of a beautiful garden, he was met by a pert lively ant, who, tossing up her head with a scornful air, cried: "Pr'ythee get out of the way, thou poor creeping animal, and do not presume to obstruct the paths of thy superiors, by wriggling along the road and besmearing the walks appropriated to their footsteeps. Poor creature! thou lookest like a thing but half made, which nature, not liking, threw by unfinished. I could almost pity thee, but it is beneath one of my quality to talk to such mean creatures as thou art: and so, poor crawler, adieu." The humble caterpillar, struck dumb with this disdainful language, retired, went to work, wound himself up in a silken cell, and at the appointed time came out a beautiful butterfly. Just as he was sallying forth, he observed the scornful ant passing by. "Proud insect," said he, "stop a moment, and learn from the circumstances in which you now see me, never to despise any one for that condition in which Providence has thought fit to place him; as there is none so mean, but may one day, either in this state or a better, be exalted above those who looked down upon him with unmerited contempt."

THE TENTYRITES AND THE ICHNEUMON.

A crocodile, of prodigious size and uncommon swiftness, infested the banks of the Nile, and spread desolation through the neighbouring country. He seized the shepherds, together with the sheep, and devoured the herdsmen as well as the cattle. Emboldened by success, and by the terror which prevailed wherever he appeared, he ventured to carry his incursions even into the Island of Tentyra, and to brave the people, who boast themselves the only tamers of his race. The Tentyrites themselves were struck with horror at the appearance of a monster so much more terrible than they had ever seen before; even the boldest of them dared not attack him openly; and the most experienced long endeavoured, with all their art and address, to surprise him, but in vain. As they were consulting together what they should do in these circumstances, an ichneumon stepped forth, and thus addressed them: "I perceive your distress, neighbours, and though I cannot assist you in the present difficulty, yet give me leave to offer you some advice that may be of use to you for the future. A little prudence is worth all your courage: it may be glorious to overcome a great evil, but the wisest way is to prevent it. You despise the crocodile while he is small and weak, and do not sufficiently consider that as he is a long-lived animal, so it is his peculiar property to grow as long as he lives. You see I am a poor little feeble creature, yet am I much more terrible to the crocodile, and more useful to the country than you are. I attack him in the egg; and while you are contriving for months together how to get the better of one crocodile, and all to no purpose, I effectually destroy fifty of the species in a day."

Many evils, of which we complain, might have been conquered at first, if we had possessed the prudence to reflect on their consequences. It is only when suffered to grow into magnitude that they become insurmountable.

MAN AND HIS LIKENESS.

ONCE a lover there was, and he loved in strange fashion;
The flame from his breast other feelings could drive all:
Himself was the object ador'd, and this passion
Reign'd fixed in his heart, without dreading a rival.
Our dandy Narcissus, of comical shape,
Was warp'd all awry, and his head was an ass's.
His mirror still shewed him the face of an ape,
But he always believed that the fault was the glass's.

Other mirrors repeated, alack! the same story!
He swore that the world had together conspired
To spoil of his beautiful person the glory;
So he made them his bow, and in dudgeon retired.
Removed from all glasses a fair lake he found,
Which shew'd the same image most faithfully frightful,
Yet so bright the reflection, so charming the ground,
He could not help owning the view was delightful.

Now who do you think is this whimsical elf?
I'll explain, lest you think me a mere idle prater.—
'Tis the mind;—'tis you, Reader—the Poet himself—
And our friends are the mirrors, which shew us our nature.
The lake—the sage maxims of one shrewd adviser,
Who shews all the follies our hearts which environ:
Rochefoucalt may make most of us better and wiser—
Childe Harold held up his dark mirror to Byron.

THE SENSITIVE PLANT AND THE PALM-TREE.

THE sensitive plant being brought out of the green-house on a fine summer's day, and placed in a beautiful grove adorned with the finest forest trees and most curious plants, began to give himself great airs, and to treat all that were about him with much petulance and disdain. "Lord!" said he, "how could the gardener think of setting me among a parcel of trees; gross, inanimate things; mere vegetables, and perfect stocks! Surely he does not take me for a common plant, when he knows that I have the sense of feeling in a more exquisite degree than himself! It really shocks me to see into what wretched, low company he has introduced me: it is more than the delicacy of my constitution, and the extreme tenderness of my nerves can bear. Pray, Mrs. Acacia, stand a little further off, and don't presume quite so much upon your idle pretence of being my cousin. Good Mr. Citron, keep your distance I beseech you; your strong scent quite overpowers me. Friend Palm-tree, your offensive shade is really more than I am able to support." The lofty palm-tree, as he was shooting up his head with

the more vigour under the weight that was hung upon it, condescended to rebuke the impertinent creature in the following manner: "Thou vegetable fribble, learn to know thyself, and thy own worthlessness and insignificance! Thou valuest thyself on a vicious softness, a false delicacy, the very defect and imbecility of thy nature! What art thou good for, that shrinkest at a touch, and droopest at a breath of air; feeble and barren, a perpetual torment to thyself, and wholly useless to others? Whereas we, whom thou treatest with such disdain, make a grateful return to man for his care of us. Some of us yield him fruit, others are serviceable to him for their strength and firmness; we shade him from the heat of the sun, and we defend him from the violence of the winds. I am particularly distinguished for my hardiness and perseverance, my steadiness and constancy: and on account of those very qualities which thou wantest and affectest to despise, have the honour to be made the emblem of conquest, and the reward of the conqueror."

THE WOODCOCK AND THE MALLARD.

A woodcock and a mallard were feeding together in some marshy ground at the tail of a mill-pond. "Lord!" said the squeamish woodcock, "in what a voracious and beastly manner do you devour all that comes before you! Neither snail, frog, toad, nor any kind of filth, can escape the fury of your enormous appetite. All alike goes down, without measure and without distinction. What an odious vice is gluttony."—"Good lack!" replied the mallard, "pray how came you to be my accuser; and whence has your excessive delicacy a right to censure my plain eating? Is it a crime to satisfy one's hunger; or is it not a virtue rather, to be pleased with the food which Nature offers us? Surely I would sooner be charged with gluttony, than with that finical and sickly appetite on which you are pleased to ground your superiority of taste. What a silly vice is daintiness."

Thus endeavouring to palliate their respective passions, our epicures parted with mutual contempt. The mallard hastening to devour some garbage, which was in reality a bait, immediately gorged a hook through mere greediness and oversight: while the woodcock, flying through a glade, in order to seek his favourite juices, was entangled in a net, spread across it for that purpose; each of them falling a sacrifice to their different, but equal foibles.

HERCULES.

When Hercules was admitted into Heaven, he made his obeisance to Juno before any other deity. All Olympus and Juno were struck with amazement. "What," cried every one, "do you give precedence to your enemy?"—"Yes, even to her," replied Hercules. "It was mainly her persecutions which gave me the opportunities of achieving those deeds by which I have rendered Heaven so much service."

Olympus approved of the answer of the new god, and Juno became reconciled to him.

MOMUS.

It is said that Momus was perpetually blaming and ridiculing whatever he saw. Even the works of the gods themselves could not escape his universal censure. "The eyes of the bull were so placed," he said, "by Jupiter, that they could not direct his horns in pushing at his enemies. The houses which Minerva had instructed men to build, were contrived so very injudiciously, that they could not be removed from a bad neighbourhood, nor from any other inconvenience." In short, the frame of man himself was, in his opinion, extremely defective; having no window in his bosom that might demonstrate his sincerity, or betray his wicked purposes, and prevent their execution. These, and many other faults were found in the productions of Nature. But when he surveyed the works of art, there was no end of his altercations. Jupiter, being resolved to try how far his malice would proceed, sent his daughter Venus to desire that he would give his opinion of her beauty. She appeared accordingly before the churlish god, trembling at the apprehension of his known severity. He examined her proportions with all the rigour of an envious critic. But her shape and complexion were so striking, and her smiles and graces so very engaging, that he found it impossible to give the least colour to any objection he could make. Yet to shew how hard malevolence will struggle for a cavil; as she was retiring from his presence, he begged she would acquaint her father, that whatever grace might be in her motion, yet—*her slippers were too noisy.*

LOVE AND FOLLY.

In the most early state of things, and among the eldest of beings, existed that god, as the poets entitle him, or rather that demon, as Plato calls him, whose name is Love. He had assisted the father of the gods, in reducing chaos in order, in establishing the harmony of the universe, and in regulating and putting in execution the laws by which the operations of Nature are performed, and the frame of the world subsists. Universal good seemed to be his only study, and he was the supreme delight both of gods and men. But in process of time, among other disorders that arose in the universe, it appeared that Love began to deviate very often from what had seemed till now to be his chief pursuit. He would raise frequent disturbances and confusion in the course of Nature; though it was always under the pretence of maintaining order and agreement. It seems he had entered into a very intimate acquaintance with a person who had lately made her appearance in the world. This person was Folly, the daughter of Pride. They were often together; and as often as they were, some mischief was sure to be the consequence. By degrees he introduced her into the heavens; where it was their great joy, by various artifices, to lead the gods into such measures as involved them in many inconveniences, and exposed them to much ridicule. They deluded them all in their turns, except Minerva, the only divinity that escaped their wiles. Even Jupiter himself was induced by them to take some steps not at all suitable to the dignity of his character. Folly had entirely acquired the ascendant over her

companion; however, she resolved to make still more sure of him, and engross him wholly to herself. With this design she infused a certain intoxicating juice into his nectar, he effects of which were so powerful, that, in the end, it utterly deprived him of his sight. Love was too much prejudiced in her favour, to apprehend her to be the cause of his misfortune; nor in deed did he seem to be in the least sensible of his condition. But his mother Venus soon found it out; and in the excess of her grief and rage, carried her complaint to Jupiter, conjuring him to punish the sorceress who had blinded her son. Jupiter, willing to clear the heavens of such troublesome company, called both parties before him, and enquired into their conduct. After a full hearing, he determined that Folly should make some sort of reparation for the injury done to Love; and being resolved to punish both for the many irregularities which they had lately introduced, he condemned Love to wander about the earth, and ordered Folly to be his guide.

THE DISCONTENTED LABOURER.

"Heavens, how superb! what wealth, what cheer!
Master and servants all appear
With noble air and princely pride."
'Twas thus an honest traveller cried,
New-risen from the luxurious board
Of an august and wealthy lord.
This warm encomium caught the ear
Of a poor labourer toiling near,
Whose luck had not been quite so good,
And put him in a peevish mood:—
"'Tis mighty fit, forsooth," he says,
"The merits of my lord to praise!
Yet mark the bound of all his care—
As every neighbour can declare—
'Tis, just with méat and drink to feed
Such guests alone as neither need."

Without more aid, I leave vain glory
To trace the meaning of the story.

THE SUN AND THE VAPOUR.

In the evening of a summer's day, the sun, as he descended behind the western hills, beheld a thick and unwholesome vapour extending itself over the whole face of the valleys. Every shrub, and every flower immediately folded up its leaves, and shrunk from the touch of this detested enemy. "Well hast thou chosen," said the god of day, "this the hour of my departure, to spread thy pestilential influence, and taint the beauties of the creation. Enjoy for a short space the notable triumphs of thy malignity. I shall return again with the morning, repair thy mischiefs, and put an end to thy existence. May the slanderer in thy fate discern his own, and be warned to dread the return of truth!"

THE DRUNKEN HUSBAND.

A WOMAN had a drunken husband, with whom, when she had vainly endeavoured to reclaim him, she tried this stratagem. When he was brought home one night, dead drunk, as it seems he frequently used to be, she ordered him to be carried to a burial-place, and there laid him in a vault, as if he had been dead indeed. She left him and went away, till she thought he might be come to himself, and grown sober again. When she returned and knocked at the door of the vault, the man cried out: "Who's there?"—"I am the person," said she in a dismal tone, "that waits upon the dead, and I have come to bring you some victuals."—"Ah! good waiter," said he, "let the victuals alone, and bring me a little drink I beseech thee." The woman, hearing this, tore her hair, and beat her breast in a woeful manner. "Unhappy wretch that I am," said she, "this was the only way I could think of to reform the beastly sot; but instead of gaining my point, I am only convinced that his drunkenness is an incurable habit, which he intends to carry with him to the other world."

This Fable is intended to shew how, by using ourselves much to any evil practice, it may grow into such a habit as we can never divest ourselves of. In anything that we are sensible may be prejudicial to either our health or fortunes, we should take care not to let our inclinations run into habit: for though the former may be easily checked at first setting out, and directed which way we please, yet the latter, like a headstrong unruly horse, in full career, will have its own course, and we are hurried impetuously on, without the power of controlling it. As the passions of young men are warm, and their imaginations lively, it would be wrong to endeavour to tie them from the pursuit of innocent pleasures. But those among them that think at all, can never form a more uesful and happy resolution, than not to suffer themselves to be drawn into habits, even in indifferent and trifling things. He that keeps himself free from the slavery of habit, will always be at leisure to distinguish what is good from that which is otherwise; and then there is no fear but his cool unbiassed judgment will direct him to such pursuits as will be least hurtful, if not most useful to him.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

A CERTAIN old woman had several maids, whom she used to call up to their work every morning at the crowing of the cock. The wenches, who found it grievous to have their sleep disturbed so early, combined together and killed the cock, thinking that, when the alarm was gone, they might enjoy themselves in their warm beds a little longer. The old woman, grieved for the loss of her cock, and having, by some means or other, discovered the whole plot, was resolved to be even with them; for, from that time, she obliged them to rise constantly at midnight.

It can never be expected that things should be, in all respects, agreeable to our wishes; and, if they are not very bad indeed, we ought, in many cases, to be contented with them; lest when, through impatience, we precipitately quit our present condition of life, we may to our sorrow find, with the old saying, that "seldom comes a better." Before we attempt any alteration of moment, we should be certain what state it will produce; for when things are already bad, to make them worse by trying experiments, is an argument of great weakness and folly, and is sure to be attended with a too late repentance. Grievances, if really such, ought by all means to be redressed, provided we can be assured of doing it with success: but we had better, at any time, bear some inconvenience, than make our condition worse by attempting to mend it.

ÆSOP AND THE IMPERTINENT FELLOW.

ÆSOP's master came home somewhat earlier than usual, and there happening to be no other slave in the house but Æsop, he was ordered to get supper ready as fast as he could. So away he ran to light a candle, in order to kindle his fire; and the weather being warm, and it wanting an hour or two of night, he went up and down to several houses before he could succeed; at last, however, he found what he wanted, and, being in haste, he made no scruple of returning directly through the market-place which was his nearest way home. But, as he went along, an impertinent fellow among the crowd caught him by the sleeve, and would fain have been arch upon him. "O rare Æsop!" said he, "what occasion for a candle, old boy? what, are you going to light the sun to bed?"—"Let me alone," said Æsop, "I am looking for a man" And having said this, scuttled home as fast as he could.

It is not every one who calls himself a man, or bears the appearance of one, that truly deserves the name. If man be a reasonable creature, and none ought to be allowed for such but those who fully come up to that definition, it is certain one would have occasion for more light than that of the sun to find them out by: and it is plain that the old philosopher did not take the impertinent fellow in the Fable for one. Nor, indeed, should such be looked upon as reasonable creatures, who, with empty nonsense, which they call wit, unseasonably interrupt men of thought and business. When one is disposed to be merry, one may bear with shallow buffoonery; as music that is not the most elegant, will keep up the spirits when once they are raised; but when the mind happens to be in a serious cast, and is to be wholly intent on any matter of importance, nothing is so offensive as a fool or a fiddle.

THE BRAZEN STATUE

A DREADFUL conflagration reduced the brazen statue of an excellent artist into a shapeless mass. This mass came into the possession of another artist, who by his skill formed another statue from it, different, in that which it represented, from the first, but quite equal to it in taste and beauty.

Envy beheld it, and gnashed his teeth. At length he bethought himself of this miserable consolation: "The good man would not have succeeded even in this wretched production, had he not by chance got possession of the material of the old statue."

THE CROW AND THE PEACOCKS.

A CONCEITED crow decked herself with the moulted feathers of the handsome peacock, and thinking herself sufficiently adorned, boldly ventured into the midst of Juno's superb *protegés*. She was recognized; and quickly did the peacocks fall upon her with their sharp beaks to tear off the deceitful trappings.

"Give over!" at length screamed the crow, "you have now got back your own." The peacocks, however, who had observed some bright plumage about the crow, exclaimed: "Silence, miserable fool; neither can these feathers be yours!"—and continued their attacks

THE COCK UNFEATHERED.

How sweet to drub the boaster well!
A secret thus the wretch you tell,
Which, be assured, he'll ne'er impart;
But still, the more abashed in heart,
The deeper sunk in shame and pain,
A look of greater joy he'll feign.
'Tis sweet to drub the boaster well.
Such things I've seen; but will not tell.
The Fable is a mirror fair,
Who will, may see their image there.
'Twas on Garumna's reedy shore,
Lord Cockrico enjoyed, of yore,
An Eastern Sultan's luscious reign;
The poultry-yard his fair domain.
This youthful hero, gay, gallant,
But insolent and prone to vaunt,
A love disaster once befel,
Which told, will prove my maxim well.
Lord Cockrico possessed a band
Of beauteous hens, at full command,
With speckled plumage gaily decked;
This, silver winged; that, golden necked;
All gentle, young, in person neat,
Submissive, modest, and discreet.
A neighbouring cock, of scanty lot,
One little lively wife had got;
A bantam bird of dusky feature,
Strong bill, alert in shape and stature;
In short, by form and turn of mind,
For active household cares designed.
Lord Cockrico, one evening found
This foreign beauty near his ground;
And, smit with love, the hour he saw her,
Swore to his bed he soon would draw her.
Ere break of day he went to find her;
She was asleep, and spouse behind her,
He wakes her with two gentle taps,
Struts, stamps the ground, his pinions claps;
Darts from his eye resistless rays,
And all his stately grace displays;
Nor once suspects so much attraction
Can fail of instant satisfaction.
He was deceived. The bantam beauty,
True to her pledged connubial duty,

Rejects him, turns with virtuous pride,
And nestles by her husband's side.
The sleep of cocks is dearly bought,
And therefore sound—as sure it ought.
Ours wakes at length—but such a waking!
Gods! when the vault of Heaven is shaking
Your vengeful thunder slower flies,
Than he at his insulter's eyes.
The husband's spurs, with fury, dart
Against the vile seducer's heart.
Had thus Atrides nobly dared,
What wealth and blood might Greece have spared!
Now all things showers of feathers cover;
The feathers of our foolish lover.
One sees him plain, tho' *non-descript*,
A gosling of its plumage stript,
In such a plight, our woeful swain
Had yet the luck his roost to gain;
Where, in a corner, almost fainting
He lay, his wretched fate, lamenting.
The morning comes, the hens appear,
"But where's the cock? the day is near,
What is he doing? some one run,
And let him not outsleep the sun.
Heavens what a sight! Is this our master?
Yes, sure 'tis he; what sad disaster."—
"Peace, little dears," with smiling eyes,
But poorly feigned, the cock replies,
"'Tis nothing, nothing but the fleas;
Did you, my darlings sleep at ease?
For me, they ne'er were half so bad,
The live-long night they drove me mad;
And 'twas no fool that said of yore,
That 'too much scratching frets the sore.'"
Thus our poor sultan, drubbed, defeated,
And of his object also cheated,
Thought, with a false and idle story,
To blind his dames, and save his glory.
Was he believed? 'Tis naught to you;
The tale were tiresome to pursue.
So here the maxim I repeat;
"To drub the boaster well is sweet!"

The fate of all pretenders here we see,
To meet but scoffing 'mid their misery.



THE CAT, THE WEASEL, AND THE YOUNG RABBIT.

THE WOLF AND THE DOG.

A LEAN, hungry, half-starved wolf, fell in one moon-shiny night with a jolly, plump, well-fed mastiff, and after the first compliments were passed, the wolf accosted him: "You look extremely well;" said he, "I think I never saw a more graceful, comely personage; but how comes it about, I beseech you, that you should live so much better than I? I may say, without vanity, that I venture fifty times more than you do, and yet I am almost ready to perish with hunger." The dog answered very bluntly: "Why you may live as well as I, if you will do the same services for it." The wolf pricked up his ears at the proposal, and requested to be informed what he must do to earn such plentiful meals. "Very little," answered the dog, "only to guard the house at night, and keep it from thieves and beggars."—"With all my heart," rejoined the wolf, "for at present I have but a sorry time of it; and, I think, to change my hard lodging in the woods, where I endure rain, frost and snow, for a warm roof over my head and plenty of food, will be no bad bargain."—"True," said the dog, "therefore you have nothing more to do than to follow me."

As they were jogging along together, the wolf spied a circle, worn round his friend's neck, and, being almost as curious as some of a higher species, he could not forbear asking what it meant. "Pooh! nothing," said the dog, "or at most a mere trifle."—"Nay, but pray," urged the wolf, "inform me."—"Why, then," said the dog, "perhaps it is the collar to which my chain is fastened; for I am sometimes tied up in the day-time, because I am a little fierce, and might bite people, and am only let loose at night. But this is done with design to make me sleep in the day, more than anything else, that I may watch the better in the night-time. As soon as the twilight appears, I am turned loose, and may go where I please. Then my master brings me plates of bones from the table with his own hands; and whatever scraps are left by the family, fall to my share: for you must know I am a favourite with everybody. So, seeing how you are to live, come along: why, what is the matter with you?"—"I beg your pardon," replied the wolf, "but you may keep your happiness to yourself. I am resolved to have no share in your dinners. Half a meal with liberty, is, in my estimation, worth a full one without it."

The lowest condition of life, with freedom, is better than the most exalted station under restraint. Æsop and Phædrus, who had both felt the bitterness of slavery, though the latter had the good fortune to have the mildest prince that ever reigned for his master, cannot forbear taking every opportunity to express their abhorrence of servitude, and their passion for liberty. Indeed, a state of slavery, with whatever seeming grandeur and happiness it may be attended, is so precarious a thing, that he who can endure it patiently, must want sense, honour, courage, and almost every virtue.

THE DRAGON AND THE TWO FOXES.

A DRAGON sat brooding over an immense treasure in a deep cave. He never slept by night or day, in order to secure it. Two foxes, artful sycophants and rogues by profession, insinuated themselves into his favour by their fulsome flatteries.

They were his bosom friends: but they who are the most courteous and obliging are not always the most sincere. They made their addresses to him with the utmost submission and respect; they admired all his idle fancies, submitted to all his sentiments, and laughed in their sleeves at the credulous gull, for believing them to be in earnest. At length he one day fell asleep between his treacherous confidants, when, having concerted their measures before-hand, they strangled him, and took possession of his treasure. The plunder was agreed to be divided; a very tender point, and one not easy to be adjusted: for two villains agree in nothing but the perpetration of their crimes.

One of them began to preach: "Of what service," said he, "will all this money be to us? a leveret had been a much more agreeable booty; we cannot make a meal of these pistoles; they are too hard of digestion. Mankind are mere fools to doat on such imaginary riches. Let not us be such silly thoughtless creatures as they are." The other pretended that these reflections had made a strong impression on him, and assured him that he would be contented for the future to lead a philosophic life, and, like Bias, carry all he had about him.

Both seemed ready to abandon their ill-gotten treasure; but both lay in ambuscade, and tore each other to pieces. One of them, as he was expiring, said to the other, who was as mortally wounded as himself: "What would you have done with all that gold?"—"The very same as you proposed to have done with it," replied the other.

A traveller being informed of their quarrel, told them they were fools. "And so are the whole race of mankind," said one of the foxes. "You can feed upon gold no more than we, and yet you murder one another for the sake of it. We foxes were wise enough, at least till now, to look on money as a useless thing. That which you have introduced amongst you as a convenience, is your misfortune. You part with a substantial good, only to pursue an empty shadow."

THE SATYR AND THE TRAVELLER.

We should immediately decline all commerce with a person we find to be a double-dealer.

A poor man, travelling in the depth of winter, through a dreary forest,—no inn to receive him, no human creature to befriend or comfort him,—was in danger of being starved to death. At last, however, he came to the cave of a satyr, where he entreated leave to rest awhile, and shelter himself from the inclemency of the weather. The satyr very civilly complied with his request. The man had no sooner entered, than he began to blow his fingers. His host, surprised at the novelty of the action, was curious to know the meaning of it. "I do it," said the traveller, "to warm my frozen joints, which are benumbed with cold." Presently afterwards, the satyr having prepared a mess of hot gruel to refresh his guest, the man found it necessary to blow his pottage too. "What," enquired the satyr, "is not your gruel hot enough?"—Yes," replied the traveller, "too hot: and I blow it to make it cooler."—"Do you so?" quoth the satyr, "then get out of my cave as fast as you can; for I desire to have no communication with a creature that blows hot and cold with the same breath."

THE TULIP AND THE VIOLET.

Once on a time, a tulip gay,
Attired in rich and fine array,
Addressed, with insolence and pride,
A violet which grew beside:
"Poor simple weed, of humble birth,
Creeping and crouching on the earth,
What insolence that thou should'st dare
Approach the queen of this parterre.
Observe my stem, erect and tall:
How odious it must be to crawl!
My splendid crown of dazzling hue,
I see is much admired by you;
Well may you mourn your dreadful lot,
Despised, neglected, and forgot;
While I, the garden's darling pride,
Am more admired than all beside!
Do take a friend's advice and grow
With harmless weeds, remote from show—
The daisy and the mignonette,
And others of the meaner set."
"Poor thing!" the violet replied,
"I envy not thy foolish pride;
Contented with my humble sphere,
I covet not a beauty here;
Much less yourself, though raised on high,
With petals dipped in golden dye.
The storm, that spares my form to wound,
Thy boasted charms will scatter round;
Or, should the blast thy beauty spare,
And gardener John, with honest care.
Protect thee from such fatal harm,
More than thyself, vain flower, I charm.
The sweets which from my breath exhale,
Perfume the zephyr's balmy gale;
And taste, neglecting thee, so fine,
Does honour at my humble shrine.
Thy scent, in truth, disgusts much more
Than all thy beauty charm'd before."
So she of plain but honest face,
Adorned with intellectual grace,
Gains more respect, is far more blest,
Than some of lovelier form possessed,
Who, like the tulip, vain and fair,
Their beauty make their chiefest care.

THE HAWK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A NIGHTINGALE, sitting alone among the shady branches of an oak, sung with so melodious and shrill a pipe, that she made the woods echo again, and aroused a hungry hawk, at a little distance off, who was watching for his prey: he had no sooner discovered the little musician, but making a stoop at the place, he seized her with his crooked talons, and bade her prepare for death. "Ah!" said she, "for mercy's sake, do not a thing so barbarous and so unbecoming yourself; consider, I never did you any wrong, and am but a small morsel for such a stomach as yours; rather attack some larger fowl, which may bring you more credit and a better meal, and let me go."—"Ay," said the hawk, "persuade me if you can; I have not met with anything till I caught you; and now you would have me let you go, in hopes of something better, would you? Pray who would be the fool then?"

They who neglect the opportunity of reaping a small advantage in hopes to obtain a better, are far from acting on a reasonable and well-advised foundation. The figure of Time is always drawn with a single lock of hair hanging over his forehead, and the back part of his head bald, to put us in mind that we should be sure to lay hold of an occasion, when presented to us, lest afterwards we repent of our omission and folly, and would recover it when too late. It is a very weak reason, too, for our refusal of an offer of kindness, that we do it because we desire or deserve a better; for it is time enough to relinquish the small affair when the great one comes, if, indeed, it ever comes. And supposing it should not, how can we forgive ourselves for letting anything slip through our hands, by vainly gaping after something we never could obtain.

THE LION AND THE GNAT.

"AVAUNT! thou paltry, contemptible insect!" said a proud lion one day to a gnat, that was frisking about in the air near his den. The gnat, enraged at this unprovoked insult, vowed revenge, and immediately darted into the lion's ear. After having sufficiently teazed him in that quarter, she quitted her station and retired under his belly, and from thence made her last and most formidable attack in his nostrils, where, stinging him almost to madness, the lion at last fell down. utterly spent with rage, vexation, and pain. The gnat, having thus abundantly gratified her resentment, flew off in great exultation; but in the heedless transports of her success, not sufficiently attending to her own security, she found herself unexpectedly entangled in the web of a spider, who, rushing out instantly upon her, put an end to her triumph and her life.

This Fable instructs us never to suffer success so far to transport us, as to throw us off our guard against a reverse of fortune.

THE CREAKING WHEEL.

THE coachman, hearing one of the wheels of his coach creak, was surprised; but more especially when he perceived that it was the worst wheel of the whole set, and which he thought had but little pretence to take such a liberty. But, upon his demanding the reason why it did so, the wheel replied "that it was natural for people who laboured under any affliction or infirmity to complain."



THE FOX AND THE STORK.

THE FOX AND THE STORK.

The fox, though in general more inclined to roguery than wit, had once a strong inclination to play the wag with a neighbouring stork. He accordingly invited her in a friendly way to dinner. "Neighbour," said he, "you must take your soup with me to day. I've had a spice of luck lately, and the pottage shall be the better for it." The stork assented, and went at the appointed time; but when the dinner came upon the table, the stork found it consisted entirely of different liquids, served up in broad shallow dishes, so that she could only dip in the end of her bill, but could not possibly satisfy her hunger. The fox lapped it up very readily, and, every now and then addressing himself to the guest, desired to know how she liked the entertainment, hoped that everything was seasoned to her mind, and protested he was very sorry to see her eat so sparingly. The stork, perceiving she was played upon, took no notice of it, but pretended to like every dish extremely; and, at parting, pressed the fox so earnestly to return her visit, that he could not in civility refuse.

The day arrived, and he repaired to his appointment: "My dear stork," said he, on entering, "I've brought an excellent appetite, and I perceive, from the steam of your kitchen, that you have a sumptuous dinner." But, to his great mortification, when dinner appeared, he found it composed of minced goose, served up in long narrow-necked glasses; so that he was only tantalized with the sight of what it was impossible for him to taste. The stork thrust in her long bill and helped herself very plentifully; then, turning to Renard, who was eagerly licking the outside of a jar where some sauce had been spilled: "I am very glad," said she, smiling, "that you seem to have so good an appetite; I hope you will make as hearty a dinner at my table, as I did the other day at yours." Renard hung down his head and looked very much displeased: "Nay, nay," said the stork, "don't pretend to be out of humour about the matter: they that cannot take a jest, should never make one."

INDUSTRY AND SLOTH.

How many live in the world as useless as if they had never been born! They pass through life like a bird through the air, and leave no track behind them; waste the prime of their days in deliberating what they shall do; and bring them to a period without coming to any determination.

An indolent young man, being asked why he lay in bed so long, jocosely and carelessly answered: "Every morning of my life I am hearing causes. As soon as I awake I have two fine girls,—their names are Industry and Sloth,—close at my bed-side, pressing their different suits. One entreats me to get up, the other to lie still: and then they alternately give me various reasons why I should rise and why I should not. As it is the duty of an impartial judge to hear all that can be said on either side, this detains me so long, that before the pleadings are over it is time to go to dinner."

THE PHŒNIX.

After the lapse of several centuries, the phœnix thought fit to let himself be seen once again. He appeared, and all the beasts and birds gathered around him. They gaped and stared in stupid astonishment, and at length burst out in a transport of praise.

Presently, however, the best and most sociable turned away their faces, full of compassion, and said with a sigh: "The unhappy phœnix!" It was his hard fate to possess neither consort nor friends; for there never exists but one of the species.

THE COURT OF DEATH.

Death, the king of terrors, was determined to choose a prime minister; and his pale courtiers, the ghastly train of diseases, were all summoned to attend, when each preferred his claim to the honour of this illustrious office. Fever urged the numbers he destroyed; cold Palsy set forth his pretensions by shaking all his limbs; and Dropsy by his swelled, unwieldy carcase. Gout hobbled up, and alleged his great power in racking every joint; and Asthma's inability to speak, was a strong, though silent argument in favour of his claim. Stone and Cholic pleaded their violence; Plague, his rapid progress in destruction; Consumption, though slow, insisted that he was sure. In the midst of this contention, the court was disturbed with the noise of music, dancing, feasting and revelry; when immediately a lady entered, with a bold and wanton air, and a flushed and jovial countenance. She was attended, on one hand, by a troop of cooks and bacchanals, and on the other by a train of wanton youths and damsels, who danced half naked to the softest musical instruments; her name was Intemperance. She waved her hand and thus addressed the crowd of diseases: "Give way, ye sickly band of pretenders, nor dare to vie with my superior merits in the service of this great monarch. Am I not your parent, the author of your being? Do ye not derive your power of shortening human life almost wholly from me? Who, then, so fit as myself for this important office?" The grisly monarch grinned a smile of approbation, placed her at his right hand, and she immediately became his prime favourite and principal minister.

THE TRUMPETER.

A trumpeter in a certain army happened to be taken prisoner. He was ordered for immediate execution, but pleaded, in excuse for himself, that it was unjust a person should suffer death, who, far from intending to do mischief, did not even wear an offensive weapon. "So much the rather," replied one of the enemy, "shalt thou die; since, without any design of fighting thyself, thou excitest others to the bloody business; for he that is the abettor of a bad action, is at least equally guilty with him that commits it."

THE BOY AND THE NETTLE.

A LITTLE boy playing in the fields, chanced to be stung by a nettle, and came crying to his father. He told him, he had been hurt by that nasty weed several times before; that he was always afraid of it; and that now he did but just touch it, as lightly as possible, when he was so severely stung. "Child," said he, "your touching it so gently and timorously is the very reason of its hurting you. A nettle may be handled safely, if you do it with courage and resolution; if you seize it boldly, and gripe it fast, be assured it will never sting you; and you will meet with many sorts of persons, as well as things in the world, that ought to be treated in the very same manner."

THE KING-FISHER AND THE SPARROW.

As a king-fisher was sitting in a shady spot upon the banks of a river,. she was suddenly surprised by the fluttering of a sparrow that had eloped from the neighbouring town to visit her. When the first compliments were over: "How is it possible," said the sparrow, "that a bird so finely adorned can think of spending all her days in the very depth of retirement! The golden plumage of your breast, the shining azure of your pinions, were never given you to be concealed, but to attract the wonder of beholders. Why, then, should you not endeavour to know the world, and be at the same time, both known and admired yourself?"—"You are very complaisant at least," replied the king-fisher, "to conclude that my being admired would be the consequence of my being known. But it has sometimes been my lot, in the lonesome vallies that I frequent, to hear the complaints of beauty that has been neglected, and of worth that has been despised. Possibly it does not always happen that even superior excellence is found to excite admiration or to obtain encouragement. I have learned, besides, not to build my happiness upon the opinion of others, so much as upon self-conviction and the approbation of my own heart. Remember, I am a king-fisher; these woods and streams are my delight, and so long as they are free from winds and tempests, believe me, I am perfectly content with my situation. Why, therefore, should I court the noise and bustle of the world, which I find so little agreeable to my native disposition? It may be the joy of a sparrow to indulge his curiosity, and display his eloquence. I, for my part, love silence, privacy and contemplation; and think that every one should consult the native bias of his temper, before he chooses the way of life in which he expects to meet with happiness."

THE MONKEY.

How many are there in the world, who, by their artful cringes, volubility of speech and modish airs, without a grain of sense or good manners, pass for fine gentlemen!

An arch old monkey being dead, his ghost descended into the gloomy habitation

of Pluto, and there petitioned to be allowed to return amongst the living. The god consented to send him back, provided he would be content with the body of an ass, that he might no more play his antic, wanton and unlucky tricks. But, at the same time, he played such pranks and was so diverting, that the generally inexorable deity could not forbear smiling and granting him his free choice to assume what state he pleased. He begged leave to take the form of a parrot: "In which," said he, "I shall at least retain some faint resemblance of mankind, whom I have copied for so many years. When a monkey, I acted like them; and, as a parrot, I shall talk like them, and share in their most polite conversations."

Scarcely was the monkey's soul introduced to its new tenement, than an old chattering gossip bought him. He was her heart's delight; she bestowed a fine cage upon him. He fared deliciously, and conversed all day long with the old doater, whose discourse was not more rational than his. To his new faculty of deafening all the neighbours, he added some small tincture of his old propensities. He waved his head with affectation, made a crackling with his bill, expanded his wings a hundred ways, and played such pranks with his claws, as bore a near resemblance to his former antic postures. The old woman would peer every moment through her spectacles to admire him. She was much concerned that she was deaf, and lost, by that means, the beauty of some of Poll's expressions, whom she looked upon as a perfect wit. The parrot thus fondled, grew obstreperous, impertinent and foolish. He fluttered about so much in his cage, and drank wine with his old mistress to such excess, that he soon died.

Again his ghost appeared before the throne of Pluto. To make him silent, the god, this time, doomed him to animate a fish; but he played his old farce over again before the king of the shades, and princes seldom reject the petitions of sycophants who flatter them. Pluto gave him permission, therefore, to become a man; but as he was ashamed to let him enter the body of one that was discreet and virtuous, he joined him to a noisy and impertinent speech-maker, a notorious liar, an eternal braggart, who would laugh at and banter everybody, and interrupt the best and most agreeable conversation. Mercury, who discovered him under this metamorphosis, said to him one day with a smile: "So so, I know that thou art nothing but a compound of monkey and parrot. Take but thy antic gestures from thee, and a few words which thou hast got by rote, without in the least understanding the sense of them, and thou art a mere cypher. Of a sprightly monkey and a pretty parrot, nothing can be made but a worthless coxcomb."

THE ANGLER AND THE LITTLE FISH

A MAN, angling in a river, caught a small perch, which, as he was taking it off the hook and going to put it into his basket, opened its mouth and began to implore his pity, begging that he would throw it into the river again. Upon the man's demanding what reason he had to expect such a favour: "Why," said the fish, "because, at present, I am but young and little, and, consequently, not so well worth your having as I shall be if you take me some time hence, when I am grown larger."—"That may be," replied the man, "but I am not one of those fools who quit a certainty in expectation of an uncertainty."



THE CAT AND THE TWO SPARROWS.

THE CAT, THE WEASEL AND THE YOUNG RABBIT.

ONE fine morning, Mrs. Weasel took possession of the fortress of a young rabbit. The master being absent, this was easily effected; and while he had gone to pay his respects to Aurora, she transferred her household gods to his residence. After he had browsed, trotted, and made several calls, Master Rabbit returned to his subterranean dwelling, and perceived the snout of the weasel at the window. "Oh! ye gods, what do I behold?" exclaimed the animal, excluded from the home of his fathers. "Hallo! Mrs. Weasel, get out of my house without further ado, or I shall at once give notice of your whereabouts to all the rats in the kingdom." The sharp-snouted lady replied, that the earth belonged to the first occupier. It was a fine pretence for war, indeed; a dwelling to which he had only gained access by dint of scratching; and even supposing it to be a kingdom, she would be glad to be informed what law constituted it for ever the heir-loom of John, the son or nephew of Peter or William, in preference to that of Paul, or of herself. Master Rabbit alleged use and custom. "Those, who preceded me," said he, "have rendered me lord and master of this fortress, by transmitting it from father to son, from Peter to Simon, and at length to me. Can there be anything more reasonable, than that it should belong to the original possessor?" —"Well! well," cried the weasel, "no more words about it; let us refer to and abide by the decision of Grimalkin." This was a cat, living like a pious hermit; a sanctified tabby, well coated with fur, large and fat; an expert arbitrator in all disputes. Master Rabbit consented that he should be the judge, and they soon appeared before his feline majesty. "Come nearer my children," said Grimalkin to them, "nearer still; I am very deaf, and borne down by the weight of years." Both approached fearlessly, dreading no harm. As soon as the pious Grimalkin beheld the disputants within his reach, darting his claws on either side at the same moment, he settled their differences by devouring both.

This forcibly resembles the justice sometimes dealt out to petty sovereigns, who refer their disputes to more powerful monarchs.

THE HORSE AND THE LOADED ASS.

AN idle horse, and an ass labouring under a heavy burden, were travelling the road together; they both belonged to a countryman, who trudged on foot by them. The ass, ready to faint under his heavy load, entreated the horse to assist him, and lighten his burden by taking some of it upon his back. The horse was ill-natured, and refused to do it; upon which the poor ass tumbled down in the midst of the highway, and shortly afterwards expired. The countryman ungirt his pack-saddle, and tried several ways to relieve him, but to no purpose: which when he perceived, he took the whole burden and laid it upon the horse, together with the skin of the dead ass; so that the horse, by his moroseness in refusing to do a small kindness, justly brought upon himself a greater inconvenience.

Those who are of a litigious or obstinate disposition will be able to supply the application of this fable, from personal experience of the inconveniences to which such absurd humours frequently subject them.

THE PEACOCK AND THE MAGPIE.

The birds once met together to choose a king; and the peacock standing candidate, displayed his gaudy plumes, to catch the eyes of the silly multitude with the richness of his feathers. The majority declared for him, and clapped their wings with great applause. But, just as they were going to proclaim him, the magpie stepped into the midst of the assembly, and addressed himself thus to the new king: "May it please your majesty elect to permit one of your unworthy subjects to represent to you his suspicions and apprehensions in the face of this whole congregation. We have chosen you for our king, we have put our lives and fortunes into your hands, and our whole hope and dependance is upon you; if, therefore, the eagle, the vulture, or the kite, should at any time make a descent upon us, as it is highly probable they will, may your majesty be so gracious as to dispel our fears, and clear our doubt on the matter, by letting us know how you intend to defend us against them?" This pithy, unanswerable question, drew the whole audience into so just a reflection, that they soon resolved to proceed to a new choice. But from that time the peacock has been looked upon as a vain, insignificant pretender, and the magpie as eminent a speaker as any among the whole community of birds.

Form and outside, in the choice of a ruler, should not be so much regarded as the qualities and endowments of the mind. In choosing heads of corporations, from the king of the land down to the master of a company, upon every new election it should be enquired which of the candidates is most capable of advancing the good and welfare of the community, and upon him the choice should fall. But the eyes of the multitude are so dazzled with pomp and show, noise and ceremony, that they cannot see things really as they are: and hence it comes to pass, that so many absurdities are committed and maintained in the world. People should examine and learn the real weight and merit of the person, and not be imposed upon by false colours and pretences of I know not what.

The application of this fable need not be extended in order to apply to elections for parliamentary representatives.

THE LION WITH THE ASS

As Æsop's lion was going to the forest in company with the ass, who was to assist him with his terrible voice, an impertinent crow called to him from a tree; "A pretty companion! Are you not ashamed of yourself to be walking with an ass?"—"Whoever I can make use of," replied the lion, "I may very well allow to walk by my side."

Thus think the great, when they honour a plebeian with their company.

THE ASS WITH THE LION.

As the ass was going to the forest with Æsop's lion, who made use of him instead of a hunting-bugle, he was met by another ass of his acquaintance, who called to him: "Good morning, brother!"—"Impertinent scoundrel!" was the reply.

"And wherefore?" said the former. "Because you are walking with a lion, are you any better than I? anything more than an ass?"

THE CAT AND THE RABBITS.

A cat, with affected modesty, once entered into a warren plentifully stocked with rabbits. The whole republic were immediately alarmed, and flew for refuge to their respective burrows. As this foreigner was leering about him, at a small distance from one of their little cells, the deputies of the State, who had observed his tremendous claws, parleyed with him at an avenue of their warren that was extremely narrow, and demanded to know the intention of his visit. He declared, in the most submissive tone, that all he aimed at was to learn the constitution of their republic; as he was a professor of philosophy, travelling over the world to inform himself of the various customs of the brute creation. The thoughtless, credulous deputies returned with a report to their fellow-members, that this venerable stranger, by his modest deportment and majestic fur-gown, appeared, in their opinion, to be a sober, inoffensive, pacific philosopher, who travelled from one country to another, only with the laudable view of improving his judgment; that he had visited several foreign courts, and seen a thousand surprising curiosities; and that it was an inexpressible pleasure to listen to his discourse; that he had no manner of inclination to rabbits' flesh, since, like an orthodox Brahmin, he believed in the Metempsychosis, and never tasted the least morsel of any living creature whatsoever. This fine character of him made a deep impression on the whole assembly.

An old statesman of theirs, who had long been their oracle, represented to them, but in vain, how much he suspected this grave philosopher. Notwithstanding all his dissuasions, they ventured in a body to pay their respects to the Brahmin, who, upon the first salutation, strangled seven or eight of the unguarded wretches. The surviving members escaped to their burrows, terrified to the last degree, and perfectly ashamed of their ill-conduct.

Then Grimalkin returned to the mouth of the same burrow, protesting, in the most affectionate terms, that he had committed this outrage with the utmost reluctance, in his extreme necessity; that from thenceforward he would live upon other creatures, and would make an eternal alliance with them. The rabbits were again induced to enter upon a treaty with him; but were cautious, this time, of coming within the reach of his claws: and they kept him at bay while the negociation was carried on.

In the mean time, one of their nimblest members slipped out backwards, and informed a neighbouring shepherd, who took delight in catching their young ones as they were munching the juniper-berries, of the unhappy state of their case. The shepherd, highly provoked at the cat, for his hostile treatment of so valuable a body, ran to the burrow, armed with his bow and arrows: he soon espied the cat, intent on nothing but his prey; and, wounding him with an arrow, laid Puss gasping for breath, who then made his dying speech as follows: "He who has once proved perfidious is never credited again; he is detested, feared, and at last undone, by his own wicked devices."

> 'Tis folly to the last degree,
> To hope for peace or amity,
> Or enter into league with those
> Whom nature has ordained our foes.

THE TREASURE AND THE WISHES.

A PRINCE of Babylon the great,
New mounted on the throne of state,
Chose to inspect the royal hoard
His father's care had amply stor'd,
Who only wealth on wealth amassed,
While wretched lives his people pass'd.
That Prince's faithful old vizier,
To this, in spite of custom, dear,
His master with a torch attends,
And to a secret vault descends.
A cistern there of mighty size
Attracts the monarch's ravish'd eyes;
A treasure past conception great;
And all arrang'd in form complete.
"Great God," he cries, "supreme and just!
Who honour'st me with such a trust,
O grant I may the whole bestow
In succouring want, solacing woe;
Grant also I may life retain,
Till not a penny here remain!"
While thus he speaks his noble aims,
The premier smiles. The Prince exclaims,
"Vizier, what means your silent smile?
Think you my wish proceeds from guile?"
"Pardon;" returns the softened sire,
"Your wish, my Prince, all must admire:
I smiled but as a sudden thought,
The scene to my remembrance brought.
One day, your sire, my former lord,
Led me to this imperial hoard
(Half empty then, twelve feet, or more,
Were wanting of its present store),
Here I beheld the monarch kneel,
And thus exclaim with pious zeal:
'Great God, who spinn'st my vital thread,
Thou know'st my wish—let it succeed:
This well, not furnished to my will,
O grant me only life to fill.'"

THE OX AND THE CALF.

A POWERFUL ox tore away the upper part of the door-way with his horns, in pushing himself through the low entrance to his stall. "Look, master!" shouted a young calf; "*I* do not injure you in this manner."—"How gladly do I wish," said the latter, "that you were able to do so."

THE HOG AND OTHER ANIMALS.

A DEBATE once arose among the animals in a farm-yard, which of them was most valued by their common master. After the horse, the ox, the cow, the sheep, and the dog, had stated their several pretensions, the hog took up the discourse.

"It is plain," said he, "that the greatest value must be set upon that animal which is kept most for his own sake, without expecting from him any return of use and service. Now which of you can boast so much in that respect as I can?

"As for you, horse, though you are very well fed and lodged, and have servants to attend upon you, and make you sleek and clean, yet all this is for the sake of your labour. Do not I see you taken out early every morning, put in chains, or fastened to the shafts of a heavy cart, and not brought back till noon; when, after a short respite, you are taken to work again till late in the evening? I may say just the same to the ox, except that he works for poorer fare.

"For you, Mrs. Cow, who are so dainty over your chopped straw and grains, you are thought worth keeping only for your milk, which is drained from you twice a day, while your young ones are taken from you, and sent I know not whither.

"You, poor innocent sheep, who are turned out to shift for yourselves upon the bare hills, or penned upon the fallows, with now and then a withered turnip, or some musty hay—you pay dearly enough for your keep, by resigning your warm coat every year, for want of which you are liable to be starved to death on some of the cold nights before summer.

"As for the dog, who prides himself so much on being admitted to our master's table, and made his companion, that he will scarcely condescend to reckon himself one of us, he is obliged to do all the offices of a domestic servant by day, and to keep watch all the night, while we are quietly asleep.

"In short, you are all of you creatures maintained for use; poor, subservient things, made to be enslaved or pillaged. I, on the contrary, have a warm sty, and plenty of provisions, all at free cost. I have nothing to do but to grow fat, and follow my amusement; and my master is best pleased when he sees me lying at ease in the sun, or filling my belly."

Thus argued the hog, and put the rest to silence by so much logic and rhetoric. This was not long before winter set in. It proved a very scarce season for fodder of all kinds; so that the farmer began to consider how he was to maintain all his live stock till spring. "It will be impossible for me," thought he, "to keep them all; I must therefore part with those I can best spare. As for my horses and working oxen, I shall have business enough to employ them; they must be kept, cost what it will. My cows will not give me much milk in the winter, but they will calve in the spring, and be ready for the new grass. I must not lose the profit of my dairy. The sheep, poor things, will take care of themselves as long as there is a bite upon the hills; and if deep snow comes, we must do with them as well as we can, by the help of a few turnips and some hay, for I must have their wool at shearing time, to make out my rent with. But my hogs will eat me out of house and home, without doing me any good. They must go to pot, that's certain; and the sooner I get rid of the fat ones, the better."

So saying, he singled out the *orator* as one of the prime among them, and sent him to the butcher the very next day.

THE GOLDFINCH AND THE LINNET.

A gaudy goldfinch, pert and gay,
Hopping blithe from spray to spray,
Full of frolic, full of spring,
With head well plumed and burnished wing,
Spied a sober linnet hen,
  Sitting all alone,
And bowed, and chirped, and bowed again,
  And with familiar tone
He thus the dame addressed,
As to her side he closely pressed :
  " I hope, my dear, I don't intrude,
By breaking on your solitude ;
But it has always been my passion
To forward pleasant conversation ;
And I should be a stupid bird
To pass the fair without a word ;
I, who have been for ever noted
To be the sex's most devoted.
Besides, a damsel unattended,
Left unnoticed and unfriended,
Appears, excuse me, so forlorn,
  That I can scarce suppose,
By any she that e'er was born,
  'Twould be the thing she chose.
How happy, then, I'm now at leisure
To wait upon a lady's pleasure ;
And all this morn have nought to do
But pay my duty, love, to you.
  " What, silent !—Ah ! those looks demure,
And eyes of languor, make me sure
That in my random idle chatter
I quite mistook the matter !
It is not spleen or contemplation
  That draws you to the cover ;
But 'tis some tender assignation :
  Well ! who's the favoured lover ?
I met hard by, in quaker suit,
A youth sedately grave and mute ;
And from the maxim, 'like to like,'
Perhaps the sober youth might strike.
Yes, yes, 'tis he, I'll lay my life,
Who hopes to get you for his wife.
But come, my dear, I know you're wise,
Compare and judge, and use your eyes ;

No female yet could e'er behold
The lustre of my red and gold.
My ivory bill and jetty crest,
But all was done, and I was blest.
Come, brighten up and act with spirit,
And take the fortune that you merit."
He ceased—Linnetta thus replied,
With cool contempt and decent pride;
"'Tis pity, Sir, a youth so sweet,
In form and manner so complete,
Should do a humble maid the honour
To waste his precious time upon her.
A poor forsaken she, you know,
Can do no credit to a beau:
And worse would be the case,
If meeting one whose faith was plighted,
He should incur the sad disgrace
Of being slighted.
Now, Sir, the sober-suited youth,
Whom you were pleased to mention,
To those small merits, sense and truth,
And generous love, has some pretension:
And then, to give him all his due,
He sings, Sir, full as well as you,
And sometimes can be silent too.
In short my taste is so perverse,
And such my wayward fate,
That it would be my greatest curse
To have a coxcomb for my mate."
This said, away she scuds,
And leaves Beau Goldfinch in the suds.

THE FARMER, THE CRANES, AND THE STORK.

A STORK was unfortunately drawn into company with some cranes, who were just setting out on a party of pleasure, as they called it, though in truth it was to rob the fish-ponds of a neighbouring farmer. Our simple stork agreed to make one; and it so happened that they were all taken in the fact. The cranes, having been old offenders, had very little to say for themselves, and were presently despatched; but the stork pleaded hard for his life. He urged that it was his first offence, that he was not naturally addicted to stealing fish, that he was famous for piety to his parents, and, in short, had many virtues. "Your piety and virtue," said the farmer, "may for aught I know be exemplary; but your being in company with thieves renders it very suspicious; and you must, therefore, submit with patience to share the same punishment with your companions."

THE CAMELEON.

Two travellers on their journey, happened to be engaged in a warm dispute about the colour of the cameleon. One of them affirmed it was blue; that he had seen it with his own eyes upon the naked branch of a tree, feeding on the air, in a very clear day. The other strongly asserted it was green, and that he had viewed it very closely and minutely on the broad leaf of a fig-tree. Both of them were positive, and the dispute was rising to a quarrel; but a third person luckily coming by, they agreed to refer the question to his decision. "Gentlemen," said the arbitrator, with a smile of great self-satisfaction, "you could not have been more lucky in your reference, as I happen to have caught one of them last summer, and the creature is totally black."—"Black! impossible!"—"Nay," quoth the umpire, with great assurance, "the matter may soon be decided, for I immediately enclosed my cameleon in a little paper box, and here it is." So saying, he drew it out of his pocket, opened his box, and behold, it was as white as snow. The positive disputants looked equally surprised, and equally confounded: while the sagacious reptile, assuming the air of a philosopher, thus admonished them: "Ye children of men, learn diffidence and moderation in your opinions. It is true, you happen, in the present instance, to be all in the right, and have only considered the subject under different circumstances; but pray, for the future, allow others to have eye-sight as well as yourselves, and be candid enough not to condemn any man for judging of things as they appear to his own view."

THE BUTTERFLY, THE SNAIL, AND THE BEE.

A BUTTERFLY, proudly perched on the gaudy leaves of a French marygold, was boasting the vast extent and variety of his travels. "I have ranged," said he, "over the graceful and majestic scenes of Windsor, and have feasted my syce with elegance and variety at Ampthill. I have wandered through regions of eglantine and honey-suckle, have revelled in kisses on beds of violets and cowslips, and enjoyed the delicious fragrance of roses and carnations. In short, my fancy unbounded, and my flights unrestrained, I have visited with perfect freedom all the flowers of the field or garden, and must be allowed to know the world, in a superlative degree."

A snail, who hung attentive to his wonders on a cabbage-leaf, was struck with admiration; and concluded him, from all this experience, to be the wisest of animal creatures.

It happened that a bee pursued her occupation on a neighbouring bed of marjoram, and having heard our ostentatious vagrant, reprimanded him in this manner: "Vain, empty flutterer," said she, "whom instruction cannot improve, nor experience itself enlighten! Thou hast rambled over the world, wherein does thy knowledge of it consist? Thou hast seen a variety of objects, what conclusions hast thou drawn from them? Thou hast tasted of every amusement; hast thou extracted anything for use? I too am a traveller: go and look into my hive, and let my treasures intimate to thee, that the end of travelling is, to collect materials either for the use and emolument of private life, or for the advantage of the community."

THE SNUFF-BOX AND SPECTACLES.

A GENTLEMAN having finished his book, when he had taken a pinch of snuff, took off his spectacles and laid them down beside his snuff-box. "Ah!" cried the latter to the former, "I am a better assistant to my master than you, for I clear his head, and make him comprehend what he reads."—"Nonsense!" answered the spectacles, "he could not read at all only for my aid; you serve for his amusement, and are a mere superfluity."

THE RAT AND THE IDOL.

A RAT had found a snug abode;
(The belly of a wooden god)
And there a jovial life he led:
Each morn a bull or heifer bled,
And smeared the shrine with gore and tallow,
In which, at will, the rat could wallow,
And, by his luck perhaps grown vain,
The false idea caught his brain,
He was, in truth, himself the god,
For whom the altar bore its load;
But all things end in this frail state:
Such the supreme decree of Fate,
Whose law, with equal rigour, flings
Its common chain o'er rats and kings.
One day the idol chanc'd to fall,
Shook from its tottering pedestal,
And broke to pieces. Then the train
Of priests and votaries left the fane!
At other shrines their vows they paid,
Where other rats their nests had made.
Our hero too for want of bread,
At last his holy refuge fled,
Whence he had long with pride look'd down
On all the mousers of the town;
But now, while thro' the porch he hurried,
By a revengeful cat was worried;
And this wise lesson left his brats,
"Luck shifts: and rats are still but rats."

THE BLIND HEN.

A HEN who had lost her sight, and was accustomed to scratching up the earth in search of food; although blind, still continued to scratch away most diligently. Of what use was it to the industrious fool? Another sharp-sighted hen who spared her tender feet, never budged from her side, and enjoyed, without scratching, the fruit of the other's labour. For as often as the blind hen scratched up a barley-corn, her watchful companion devoured it.

THE YOUNG MEN AND THE COOK.

Two young men went into a cook's shop, under pretence of buying meat, and while the cook's back was turned, one of them snatched up a piece of beef and gave it to his companion, who presently clapped it under his cloak. The cook, turning about again, and missing his beef, began to charge them with it: upon which, he that took it, swore bitterly that he had it not; he that had it, swore as heartily that he had not taken it. "Why, look ye, gentlemen," said the cook, "I see your equivocation; and though I cannot tell which of you has taken my meat, I am sure, between you both, there is a thief and a couple of rascals."

THE LITIGIOUS CATS.

Two cats having stolen some cheese, could not agree about dividing their prize. In order, therefore, to settle the dispute, they consented to refer the matter to a monkey. The proposed arbitrator very readily accepted the office; and producing a balance, put a part into each scale. "Let me see," said he; "aye, this lump outweighs the other;" and immediately bit off a piece, "to reduce it," as he observed, "to an equilibrium." The opposite scale was now become the heavier; which afforded our conscientious judge an additional reason for a second mouthful. "Hold, hold," said the two cats, who began to be alarmed for the event, "give us our respective shares, and we are satisfied,"—"If you are satisfied," returned the monkey, "justice is not; a case of this intricate nature is by no means so soon determined." Upon which he continued to nibble first one piece, and then the other; till the poor cats, seeing their cheese gradually diminishing, entreated him to give himself no further trouble, but deliver to them what remained. "Not so fast, I beseech you, friends," replied the monkey; "we owe justice to ourselves as well as to you; what remains is due to me in right of my office." Upon which he crammed the whole into his mouth, and with great gravity dismissed the court.

THE ELM-TREE AND THE VINE.

An extravagant young vine, vainly ambitious of independence, and fond of rambling at large, despised the alliance of a stately elm that grew near, and courted her embraces. Having risen to some small height without any kind of support, she shot forth her flimsy branches to a very uncommon and superfluous length; calling on her neighbour to take notice how little she wanted his assistance. "Poor infatuated shrub," replied the elm, "how inconsistent is thy conduct! Wouldst thou be truly independent, thou shouldst carefully apply those juices to the enlargement of thy stem, which thou lavishest in vain upon unnecessary foliage. I shortly shall behold thee grovelling on the ground; yet countenanced, indeed, by many of the human race, who, intoxicated with vanity, have despised economy; and who, to support for a moment their empty boast of independence, have exhausted the very source of it in frivolous expences."

THE OLD FOX.

An aged fox, with breathless speed,
Distracted fled across the mead:
A young one, coursing in the plain,
With pity spied and soothed his pain.
"Father," said he, "awhile repose;
You must have far outrun your foes;
For neither horn nor hound I hear:
Besides I'm fresh, and void of fear,
And, should they come, will take your place,
Perplex the scents, and mar the chase."
"I thank thee, child," old Renard said,
"But do not need thy proffer'd aid:
Mine rather now may succour thee.
Make no delay, but follow me.
I'll be thy guide, and, as we go,
The motives of my flight will shew.
"Know, then, the prince who rules this nation
Is making martial preparation;
And, through the country, every beast
Is by the royal army pressed,
Horse, camel, mule, and dromedary,
Their implements of war to carry.
Hence my alarm. I've no desire
My back with royal chests to tire;
That dignity let others try:
For me, I rather choose to fly."
Thus posting on, with cautious craft
Old Renard spoke. The other laughed.
"Father," said he, "you're crazed, I fear:
How can you think a muleteer,
With eyes to see, and broad awake,
Should us for beasts of burden take?"—
"Friend, let us steer from danger wide,"
The elder fugitive replied:
"I know full well my right to trace
Extraction from the Renard race;
But this, my child, I also know,
And knowledge to experience owe,
That, should some royal *crimp* lay hand
On me, thus calling to his band:
'Come seize it, soldiers, seize it straight;
'Tis a fine camel, fit for weight.'
Think not or prayers or tears of mine
Would save me from their base design:

My limbs beneath a load would bend,
Before I could myself defend:
And, ere they deign'd to hear me speak
My breath would fail, my back would break."

NATURE AND EDUCATION.

Nature and Education were one day walking together through a nursery of trees. "See," said Nature, "how straight and fine those firs grow; that is my doing! But as to those oaks, they are all crooked and stunted: that my good sister is your fault. You have planted them too close, and not pruned them properly."—"Nay sister," said Education, "I am sure I have taken all possible pains about them; but you gave me bad acorns, so how should they ever make fine trees?"

The dispute grew warm; and at length, instead of blaming one another for negligence, they began to boast of their own powers, and to challenge each other to a contest for the superiority. It was agreed that each should adopt a favourite, and rear it up in spite of the ill-offices of her opponent. Nature fixed upon a vigorous young Weymouth Pine, the parent of which had grown to be the main-mast of a man of war. "Do what you will to this plant," said she to her sister, "I am resolved to push it up as straight as an arrow." Education took under her care a crab-tree. "This," said she, "I will rear to be at least as valuable as your pine."

Both went to work. While Nature was feeding her pine with plenty of wholesome juices, Education passed a strong rope round its top, and pulling it downwards with all her force, fastened it to the trunk of a neighbouring oak. The pine laboured to ascend, but not being able to surmount the obstacle, it pushed out to one side, and presently became bent like a bow. Still, such was its vigour, that its top, after descending as low as its branches, made a new shoot upward; but its beauty and usefulness were quite destroyed.

The crab-tree cost Education a world of pains. She pruned and pruned, and endeavoured to bring it into shape, but in vain. Nature thrust out a bow this way, and a knot that way, and would not push a single leading shoot upwards. The trunk was, indeed, kept tolerably straight by constant efforts; but the head grew awry and ill-fashioned, and made a scrubby figure. At length Education, despairing of making a sightly plant of it, engrafted the stock with an apple, and brought it to bear tolerable fruit.

At the end of the experiment, the sisters met to compare their respective success. "Ah sister!" said Nature, "I see it is in your power to spoil the best of my works."—"Ah sister!" said Education, "it is a hard matter to contend against you; however, something may be done by taking pains enough."

ÆSOP AND THE ASS.

"The next time you write a fable about me," said the donkey to Æsop, "make me say something wise and sensible."

"Something sensible from you!" exclaimed Æsop; "what would the world think? People would call you the moralist, and me the donkey!"



THE BULL AND THE FROG.

THE BULL AND THE FROG.

A FROG once saw a huge fat ox;
Whose shape he very much admired;
And though his form all 'semblance mocks,
With envy strong the little wretch was fired,
And thought he might, by swelling out his figure,
Make his squat carcase look as big, or bigger.

"Brother, look here," the pigmy cries,
"Am I not like yon portly creature?
I mean, dear Sir, in point of size,
If not in feature."—
"Oh no!"—"Indeed!—well now, I guess,
My growing bulk is little less,
Or equal quite."—
"Not the least like it." Still in vain
He puffs, and swells, and puffs again,
With all his might.
At length the fool perceives his fatal blunder;
His sides, too much distended, burst asunder!

'Mongst men you'll find some just as wise,
Where each with those above him vies
Beyond the power his means afford.
For instance, see that dashing cit,
By this vile rage absurdly bit,
Rakes, games, and squanders like a lord.

THE SHEPHERD'S BOY.

A CERTAIN shepherd's boy kept his sheep upon a common, and, in sport and wantonness, would often cry out: "The wolf! the wolf!" By this means he several times drew the husbandmen in an adjoining field from their work, who, finding themselves deluded, resolved for the future to take no notice of his alarm. Soon afterwards the wolf came indeed, and the boy cried out in earnest; but no heed being given to his cries, the sheep were devoured by the wild beast.

He that is detected as a notorious liar, besides the ignominy and reproach of the thing, incurs this mischief, that he will not be able to get any to believe him again so long as he lives. However true our complaint may be, or how much soever it may be for our interest to have it believed, yet, if we have been frequently caught tripping before, we shall hardly be able to gain credit for what we relate afterwards. Though mankind are generally stupid enough to be often imposed upon, yet few are so senseless as to believe a notorious liar, or to trust a cheat upon record. These little shams, when found out, are sufficiently prejudicial to the interest of every private person who practises them. But when we are alarmed with imaginary dangers in respect of the public, till the cry grows quite stale and threadbare, how can it be expected we should know when to guard ourselves against real ones?

THE EAGLE AND THE RING.

On a day appointed for a public festival by the citizens of Samos, an eagle descended, snatched up the public ring, and afterwards dropped it into the lap of a slave. The astonished Samians applied to Xanthus to unfold the mystery, but he was not able. Æsop came forward for the purpose, but on account of his insignificance and deformity, he was despised. He, however, proved himself a more learned man than his master; for, addressing the people, he thus unfolded the mystery: "Citizens of Samos, the eagle, you know, is the monarch of birds, and, as the public ring was dropped into the lap of a slave, it forebodes that soon some of the adjacent kings will attempt to overthrow your established laws, and entomb your liberty in slavery." Shortly after, letters arrived from Crœsus, of Lydia, requiring the Samians to pay tribute, or prepare for war.

Thus Æsop shewed the learning of his mind, notwithstanding the insignificant appearance of his body; for, according to his own remarks, (given by a Greek monk,) we should not only view the front of the house, but the tenant also; for, frequently an upright and understanding soul dwells in a deformed and disordered body. It is not the shape of a cask that men admire, but the wine concealed therein.

THE SEA AND THE RIVERS.

A scholar asked Xanthus, who was intoxicated, if it were possible to drink off the sea. "Oh, very easy," cried Xanthus, "I will engage to perform it myself." Upon this, a wager was laid, and having exchanged rings, they separated. The day following, Xanthus missed his ring, and asked Æsop what was become of it. "I know not," said he, "but this I am confident of, we cannot stay here; for yesterday, when disguised with liquor, you betted your whole fortune that you would drink off the ocean; and to bind the wager, you exchanged the ring." Xanthus was alarmed, and asked Æsop if he could contrive to get rid of the wager. "To perform it," said Æsop, "is impossible; but how to avoid it I will shew you. When you meet again, be as confident as ever, and order a table to be placed on the shore; let persons be prepared to lave the ocean with cups. When the multitude have assembled, then ask what was the wager. The reply will be, that you engaged to drink the sea. Hereupon, you must address them thus: 'Citizens, you are not ignorant that many rivers discharge themselves into the sea. My agreement was to drink up the ocean, and not those streams. If you then can obstruct their course, I am ready to perform my engagement.'" Xanthus being pleased with the expedient, when the people assembled, acted and said as he was instructed, by which means he was not only highly applauded, but evaded the wager.

At this public rejoicing, while Xanthus was drinking freely, Æsop had observed that Bacchus was the parent of three evils; the first voluptuousness, the second intemperance, and the third calumny or scandal. Man, when intoxicated, knows not what he says or does; like the scholar, he will demand impossibilities, and, like Xanthus, he will make dangerous promises; in short, he verifies the proverb, that when the wine is in, the wit is out. He must afterwards exercise all his ingenuity to overcome the evil effects of voluptuousness and intemperance, and to rectify the mistakes of unguarded loquacity. If this anecdote be true, (as it is recorded by a Greek monk,) Xanthus was a very weak prince indeed.

THE LINNET AND THE SWAN.

"Cease, paltry bird, from spray to spray
To hop, and pour thy tedious lay,
For should I deign to swell my throat,
And prove my melody of note,
No fowl there is that wings the air
With me in compass could compare!"
Thus railed a swan, beneath a willow
That overhung her rushy pillow,
From whence a linnet every noon
The world enchanted with a tune;
Yet still the warbler took delight
To sing, as if in her despite,
Resembling those who ne'er refrain
To do what gives another pain.
At this the cygnet took offence,
And swore he wanted common sense;
Called him conceited, proud, and vain,
That he should thus prolong his strain,
Knowing if she her pipe should raise
No soul would listen to his lays.
The linnet paused—then laughing loud,
"I beg," he said, "you'll charm the crowd,
For, to confess a truth, I've heard,
Your melting strains have been preferred
To any songster's of the throng
That rove these willowed haunts among.
But as I ne'er have heard your lay,
I would my willing homage pay,
And should delight to find it true,
And give you praise, if praise be due!"
Lo! flatter'd by this candid speech,
The swan began so loud to screech,
That off, in haste, the linnet flew,
And bade his boasting friend adieu!

THE ECLIPSE.

One day when the moon was under an eclipse, she complained thus to the sun of the discontinuance of his favours. "My dearest friend, why do you not shine upon me as you used to do?"—"Do I not shine upon thee?" said the sun, I am very sure that I intend it."—"O no," replied the moon, "but I now perceive the reason. I see that dirty planet the earth has got between us."

The good influence of the great, would perhaps be more diffusive, were it not for their mischievous dependants, who are so frequently suffered to interpose.

THE TWO CRABS.

It is said to be the nature of a crab-fish to go backwards: however, a mother crab one day reproved her daughter, and was in a great passion with her for her untoward, awkward gait, which she desired her to alter, and not to move in a way so contradictory to the rest of the world. "Indeed, mother," said the young crab, "I walk as decently as I can, and to the best of my knowledge; but if you would have me go otherwise, I beg you would be so good as to practise it first, and shew me, by your own example, how you would have me behave myself."

The man who is so impertinent as to rebuke others for a misbehaviour of which he himself is guilty, must be either a hypocrite, or an impudent fellow. It is strange that mankind, being so apt to act wrong in most particulars, should at the same time be so prone to calumny and detraction. One would think, that they who err so notoriously and frequently themselves, should be rather tender in concealing, than officious in carping at the faults of their fellow sinners; especially considering that it is natural to be misled by our passions and appetites, into some excess or other, but unnatural and inhuman to impeach others for miscarriages of which ourselves are equally guilty. Granting it were ever so proper, or so much our duty to find fault with others, yet we must have a great share of impudence if we can bear to do it while we know ourselves liable to the same imputations. Example is a thousand times more instructive, or at least, persuasive, than precept: for though the rules for virtue were even more pressing and numerous than they are, yet, let but the fashion run upon vice, as it most commonly does, and you see how ready and conformable the world shews itself to every part.

THE DIAMOND AND THE GLOW-WORM.

A diamond happened to fall from the *solitaire* of a young lady as she was walking one evening on a terrace in the garden. A glow-worm, who had beheld it sparkle in its descent, as soon as the gloom of night had eclipsed its lustre, began to mock and to insult it. "Art thou that wondrous thing, that vauntest of thy prodigious brightness? Where now is all thy boasted brilliancy? Alas! in evil hour has fortune thrown thee within the reach of my superior blaze."—"Conceited insect!" replied the gem, "that owest thy feeble glimmer to the darkness that surrounds thee. Know, my lustre bears the test of day, and even derives its chief advantage from that distinguishing light, which discovers thee to be no more than a dark and paltry worm?"

THE MAN AND THE STONE.

Æsop having been sent to see what company was at the bath, observed that many stumbled, both going in and coming out, at a stone which lay at the entrance, and that only one attempted to lay it aside. He accordingly returned and told his master there was but one person in the bath. Xanthus arriving, and seeing a multitude, asked him the reason of his false information. Æsop told him there was a great stone at the entrance, over which many stumbled, but one only removed the obstacle; so that there was only one man, the rest being little better than cyphers.

Man, being endued with reason, is expected to overcome every trifling difficulty which impedes his course in life; he, therefore, who stumbles at any little evil, when it is in his power to remove it, may be justly deemed a fool, and not a man.

THE GOUT AND THE SPIDER.

Dire Nemesis, the sure, though slow
Avenger in the realms below,
Has often various schemes designed
In this our world to vex mankind;
And oft from Pluto's dark domains
Sent pestilence and hurricanes;
Earthquakes, which shake the shores of Tagus,
And divers minor ills to plague us.
Of this small fry the dame possest,
In order ranged, an ample chest,
Well furnished with as rich a store as
That box which poets call Pandora's.
Two at a time once issued out:
The loathsome spider, and the gout.
"Imps!" said the goddess, "leave your den!
Go seek above the abodes of men,
To you shall open every door:
Take one the rich, and one the poor.
Gout! of the two, as you're the worst,
Your's be the right of choosing first."
When gout on earth's fair surface found him,
Turning his fiery eye-balls round him,
At once proposed himself to niche
In the gay mansions of the rich.
But peering there with curious eye,
Some big-wigged folks he chanced to spy,
(This was ere fashion's power prevailing
Had cropt the solemn sons of Galen)
And canes they bore with amber heads,
Guarding their patrons downy beds:
Their only business is, they say,
To drive disease and pain away.
"Oh!" cried the gout, "I plainly see
This residence is not for me.
Spider! be yours the palace lot;
Be mine the poor man's humble cot,
For there these perukes enter not.
With peasants let me take my pleasure,
And pinch the hardy rogues at leisure."
The spider, her rich lot beholding,
Longed to deform each gilded moulding.
"That sculptured frieze and cornice fretted,
By me," said she, "shall soon be netted;
My filth these works of art shall hide,
To mortify the master's pride;

Whilst on the pangs of many a fly
I'll sate my lust of cruelty."
'Twas fixed :—and in their several stations
They both commenced their operations.
But ere this plan had lasted long,
Each found his hasty choice was wrong.
The spider felt in every room
Her mortal enemy the broom;
She shifts her ground, but soon her toil
Hasten fresh Abigails to spoil.
Gout, in his turn, was sure to meet
With rough impenetrable feet.
Each host his limbs unwieldy mocks,
Sets him to dig, hoe, cleave hard blocks.
His engines fail of racking pain,
To light his fires he tries in vain;
No fuel luxury supplies,
They're quenched by constant exercise.
He moves, but finds from every neighbour
He's chased by temperance and labour.
Now having run their utmost range,
At length the fiends agree to change;
Pleased, to a hut the spider rushes,
Nor trembles with the fear of brushes.
Her bloated form collects supplies,
Unchecked from swarms of vulgar flies,
Where dust plebeian long had rested,
She plies her weaving unmolested.
Gout scours the country and the town
For sumptuous feasts, and beds of down.
Experience has his views enlightened;
No more by scare-crow perukes frightened,
The men with canes he shrewdly judges
Spring from the family of Fudges:
And strikes his talons void of fear,
In toes of alderman or peer:
Finding his late rejected quarters
The choicest spot to urge his tortures.
Both pests now thrive, and both content,
Each in his proper element.

THE MAN BIT BY A DOG.

A MAN, who had been bitten by a dog, was advised to dip a piece of bread in the blood, and give it to the offending cur. Æsop happening to pass by at the time, cautioned him at least to do it privately, as, if other dogs should see him, they would be ready to eat every one they met.

THE MONSTER IN THE SUN.

An astronomer was observing the sun through a telescope, in order to take an exact draft of the several spots which appear upon its face. While he was intent upon his observations, he was on a sudden surprised with a new and astonishing appearance. A large portion of the surface of the sun was covered with a monster of enormous size and horrible form; it had an immense pair of wings, a great number of legs, and a long and vast proboscis; and that it was alive was very apparent, from its quick and violent motions, which the observer could from time to time plainly perceive. Being sure of the fact, for how could he be mistaken in what he saw so clearly, our philosopher began to draw many surprising conclusions from premises so well established. He calculated the magnitude of this extraordinary animal, and found that he covered about two square degrees of the sun's surface; that, placed upon the earth, he would spread over half one hemisphere of it; and that he was seven or eight times as big as the moon. But what was most astonishing, was the prodigious heat he must endure; it was plain he was something of the nature of the salamander, but was of a far more fiery temperament; for it was demonstrable, from the clearest principles, that in his present situation he must have acquired a degree of heat two thousand times exceeding that of red-hot iron. It was a problem worth considering, whether he subsisted upon the gross vapours of the sun, and so, from time to time, cleared away those spots which they are perpetually forming, and which would otherwise wholly obscure and incrustate its face, or whether he might not feed on the solid substance of the orb itself, which by his means, together with the constant expanse of light, must soon be exhausted and consumed; or whether he was not now and then supplied by the falling of some eccentric comet into the sun. However this might be, he found by computation that the earth would be but short allowance for him for a few months; and further, it was no improbable conjecture, that as the earth was destined to be destroyed by fire, this fiery flying monster would remove hither at the appointed time, and might much more easily and conveniently effect a conflagration, than any comet hitherto provided for that service. In the earnest pursuit of these, and many like deep and curious speculations, the astronomer was engaged, and was preparing to communicate them to the public.

In the mean time, the discovery began to be much talked of, and all the virtuosi gathered together to see so strange a sight. They were equally convinced of the observation, and of the conclusions so clearly deduced from it. At last one, more cautious than the rest, was resolved, before he gave a full assent to the report of his senses, to examine the whole proofs of the affair, and all parts of the instrument. He opened the telescope; and, behold! a small fly was enclosed in it, which having settled on the centre of the object-glass, had given occasion to all this marvellous theory.

How often do men, through prejudice and passion, through envy and malice, fix upon the brightest and most exalted character, the grossest and most improbable imputations! It behoves us, upon such occasions, to be on our guard, and to suspend our judgments; the fault, perhaps, not being in the object itself, but in the mind of the observer.

THE YOUNG MOUSE.

A young mouse lived in a cupboard where sweetmeats were kept: she dined every day upon biscuit, marmalade, or fine sugar. Never had any little mouse lived so well. She had often ventured to peep at the family while they sat at supper; nay, she had sometimes stolen down on the carpet, and picked up the crumbs, and nobody had ever hurt her. She would have been quite happy, but that she was sometimes frightened by the cat, and then she ran trembling to the hole behind the wainscot. One day she came running to her mother in great joy. "Mother!" said she, "the good people of this family have built me a house to live in; it is in the cupboard: I am sure it is for me, for it is just big enough: the bottom is of wood, and it is covered all over with wires; and I dare say they have made it on purpose to screen me from that terrible cat, which ran after me so often; there is an entrance just big enough for me, but Puss cannot follow; and they have been so good as to put in some toasted cheese, which smells so deliciously, that I should have run in directly and taken possession of my new house, but I thought I would tell you first, that we might go in together, and both lodge there to-night, for it will hold us both."

"My dear child," said the old mouse, "it is most happy that you did not go in; for this house is called a trap, and you would never have come out again, except to have been devoured, or put to death in some way or other. Though man has not so fierce a look as a cat, he is as much our enemy, and has still more cunning."

WISDOM AND CUNNING.

As Wisdom, in the form of a beautiful young lady, was travelling along the road, it happened that she was benighted, and lost her way. She had not however wandered far, when, perceiving a light glimmer from a window at some distance, she endeavoured to direct her steps towards the house where it appeared. This proved to be no other than the miserable abode of Selfishness; who, beneath the semblance of a churlish and close-fisted peasant, had long taken up his residence in this lonesome habitation. She knocked at the door to enquire her way. The lout opened it with caution; but, being immediately struck with the uncommon lustre of so fine a figure, he found his appetite awaken, and became impatient for the gratification of it. Wisdom, on the other hand, feeling an utter detestation of him, would have willingly withdrawn herself; but alas! it was too late. He took advantage of her distress, seized, and forced her to marry him. Soon afterwards she gave birth to a squint-eyed, sallow-faced imp, towards whom she could never be induced to shew any marks of maternal affection She would not even own him as her proper offspring; and he was put into the hands of Dulness to be nursed and educated at her discretion. As he arrived to years of maturity, he was known by the name of Cunning. The faint resemblance which he bore to his mother, procured him a degree of respect among persons of small discernment, and he shewed somewhat of her address in regard to the means by which he gained his ends, but he had so much of the father, as never to extend his aims to any truly noble or social achievement.



THE ASS AND THE DOG.

THE ASS AND THE DOG.

MUTUAL assistance is the law of Nature; however, an ass, one day, defied it, and being naturally a kind-hearted beast, I scarcely know how it came about. He was journeying across the country, accompanied by the dog, and very gravely thinking of nothing. Their joint master followed; but soon lay down to sleep. The ass commenced grazing, being at that time in a meadow, the grass of which was very much to his liking. True there were no thistles; but as one must not always be dainty, he overlooked that; and, in the absence of this dish, our donkey knew very well how to make a banquet without it. The dog, dying with hunger, said to him: "Dear comrade, pray stoop a little, that I may get my dinner from your bread-pannier." No reply; the long-eared beast was fearful of losing a bite if he wasted an instant; and remained a long time deaf to his comrade's petition. At length he replied: "Friend, I advise you to wait till our master has taken his nap; when he awakes, he will not fail to give you your usual portion: he will not be long." During this conversation, another famished beast, a wolf, emerging from the forest, approached. The ass immediately called the dog to his assistance, who, without stirring, replied: "Friend, I advise you to fly, until your master wakes, he will not be long, set off at once, and run. What if the wolf overtake you? break his skull, you have been newly shod; and doubtless you will at once make him measure his length." During this sage counsel, Master Wolf effectually strangled the selfish ass.

THE STORK AND THE FOX.

"TELL me something about all the foreign countries you have seen," said the fox to the widely-travelled stork.

Hereupon, the stork began to tell him every lake, and every marsh, where he had feasted on the most delicate worms, and the plumpest frogs.

"What a time you have been in Paris, my friend. Which are the best eating-houses there? What wines did you like best?"

THE OWL AND THE EAGLE.

NARROW minds think that the system of the universe should have been framed to suit their own predilections and prejudices alone.

An owl sate blinking in the trunk of a tree, and arraigned the brightness of the sun. "What is the use of its beams," said she, "but to dazzle one's eyes so that one cannot see a mouse? For my part, I am at a loss to conceive for what purpose so glaring an object was created. We had certainly been much better without it."—"O fool!" replied an eagle, perched on a branch of the same tree, "to rail at excellence which thou can'st not taste. Ignorant! the fault is not in the sun, but in thyself. All, it is true, have not faculties to understand, nor powers to enjoy the benefit of it; but must the business and the pleasures of the world be obstructed, that an owl may catch mice?"

THE FOX AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF, having laid in a store of provisions, kept close at home, and made much of himself. The fox, observing this, thought it something particular, and went to visit him, the better to inform himself of the truth of the matter. The wolf begged to be excused from seeing him, by pretending he was very much indisposed. All this, however, did but confirm the fox in his suspicions; so away he went to a shepherd, and made disclosure of the wolf, telling him he had nothing to do but to come with a good weapon, and knock him on the head as he lay in his cave. The shepherd followed his directions, and killed the wolf. The wicked fox enjoyed the cave and provisions to himself, but enjoyed them not long, for the same shepherd passing afterwards by the hole, and seeing the fox there, despatched him also.

This Fable seems to be directed against the odious trade of informing: not that giving information against criminals and enemies of the public is in itself odious, for it is commendable; but the circumstances and manner of doing it often makes it a vile and detestable employment. He that accuses another, merely for the sake of the promised reward, or in hopes of getting his forfeited estate, or with any other such mercenary view, nay, even to save his own life, whatever he gets by the bargain, is sure to lose his reputation; for, indeed, the most innocent company is not safe with such an one, nor the neighbourhood secure in which he lives. A villain of this stamp, whose only end is getting money, will as soon betray the innocent as the guilty. Let him but know where there is a suspected person, and propose the reward, he will scarcely fail to work the suspicion up to high treason, or be at a loss to give sufficient proofs of it. We have no small comfort, concerning this sort of people, when we consider how improbable it is that they should thrive, or prosper long in their ill-gotten possessions; for he that can betray another, for the sake of a little pelf, must be a man of such bad principles, that it cannot be for the interest of any community to suffer him to live long in it. Besides, he himself would not be contented with one single villany; and there is no fear but he will provoke Justice to hurl down upon his head, at least as great a calamity as he, by his malicious information, has brought upon another.

THE TULIP AND THE ROSE.

A TULIP and a rose happened to be near neighbours in the same garden. They were both, indeed, extremely beautiful, yet the rose engaged considerably more than an equal share of the gardener's attention. Enamoured, as in truth he was, of the delicious odour it diffused, he appeared, in the eye of the tulip, to be always kissing and caressing it. The envy and jealousy of rival beauties are not easily to be concealed. The tulip, vain of its external charms, and unable to bear the thought of being forsaken for another, remonstrated, in these words, against the gardener's partiality: "Why are my beauties thus neglected? Are not my colours more bright, more various, and more inviting, than any which that red-faced thing has to display? Why, then, is she to engross your whole affection, and thus for ever to be preferred?"—"Be not dissatisfied, my fair tulip," said the gardener, "I acknowledge thy beauties, and admire them as they deserve. But there are found in my favourite rose such attractive odours, such internal charms, that I enjoy a banquet in their fragrance, which no mere beauty can have any pretensions to furnish."

THE APE AND THE MASTIFF.

An ape, who had long been chained in a large court-yard, one night broke loose. Half frantic at the unexpected event, Pug gave way to a thousand wild vagaries: he instantly demolished a cumbrous kennel, in which he had been some time tied up; then he fell to hugging, scratching, biting, pinching, and throttling the coachman's pretty little tame favourites, puppies and kittens, promiscuously, squirrels, guinea-fowls, and white mice, all unpitied, fell beneath his fangs! Next, the mischievous beast bolted in at the stable-door; tore bridles, saddles, and housings, to pieces; defaced the arms and emblazonments of the carriages; and at length, dragging down the lantern that carelessly hung from the rafter, he set fire to the premises. The coachman, who slept in the loft, was himself smothered in the flames.

In a contiguous out-shed stood a trunk, containing the poor man's wardrobe; thither our blundering incendiary briskly repaired, where, for hours together, he dressed and undressed himself with the most hideous yells and gesticulations. At every wanton change, Pug would sit demurely down amidst the smouldering ruins of the stable with the greatest *nonchalance*, as in a place of perfect security; but as soon as the unextinguished embers scorched him, up he would jump in dismay; run off, screaming, to the out-shed just mentioned, and again strip. He would then furiously ransack the trunk anew, select some new piece of frippery, and repeat his antics: day at last dawned, and every horrid extravagance became fully apparent.

A neighbour's mastiff passed the yard: "Collared, slave," exclaimed the ape, "approach, and worship! Lo! here I sit supreme, I am enlightened, I am free!"—"Alas! poor maniac!" replied the honest creature, "Poor maniac! from my heart I pity thee. Who now shall give thee food? who now shall shield thee from the sad effects of thine own unruly passions? Thy master, with all his pretty favourites, thou has butchered in thy sport! Alas! the smoke and ashes that surround thee are the sole dire recompense for all thy vengeful labours. Free thou art; but how? by violence, by massacre, by conflagration! And for what? to lacerate, to harass, to consume thine own flesh! I cannot, will not respect thee.

"Thou callest me collared slave! 'Tis true, I am curbed; you see, however, that my master allows me the free use of my limbs: were I to trangress, could you blame him in restraining me in future? My collar is a badge of discipline, not of slavery; the spikes in it are purposely placed there for my defence; I wear his honoured name engraven thereon, as a pledge of solemn assurance that he will vindicate my rights, though he is not unmindful of his own. Poor maniac fare thee well!"

JUPITER AND APOLLO.

Jupiter and Apollo were disputing together as to which was the best archer. "Let us try," said Apollo. Drawing his bow, he shot so exactly in the centre of the object aimed at, that Jupiter saw no possibility of excelling him. "I see," said he, "that you really shoot very well. I shall have some trouble in doing better. However, I'll try some other time." The cautious Jove has still to make the trial.

THE TRAVELLING ELEPHANT.*

An elephant, from Asia's coast,
To Europe's climes had newly cross'd:
Where great and small around him flew,
Keen to observe, at least to view.
"How big! how black! what pompous state,"
Exclaim the cocknies, "in his gait!
Lord! what a nose!" his trunk they mean:
While on he moves with air serene,
And eyes askance, with secret scorn,
The crowd of fools in Europe born;
For such he could at once descry,
Shrewd as the practis'd human eye.
All know how this sagacious creature
Transcends an ordinary nature:
A reasoning, moral, musing beast;
As suits the genius of the East.
Observing still whate'er was new,
A little dog his notice drew,
Which with a rope, like one disgraced,
Around its neck, the pavement paced.
Behind it, gravely stalked along,
A man who held a leathern thong,
That seemed the captive spaniel's rein,
And served his gambols to restrain.
"How now, poor wretch," the thinking beast,
With pity thus the dog addressed,
"Why thus enchained thy little head
Why like an helpless infant led?"—
"Me?" quoth the spaniel, "no such thing
I am not led; but with this string,
'Tis I that lead, as you may see,
The poor blind man who follows me.
From door to door his steps I guide:
'Tis not my penance, but my pride."
"Good!" said the elephant, "but pray
Why does his hand a staff display?
Might not a staff, in hands so wise,
Be made a substitute for eyes?"—
"No," quoth the dog, "that fashion's o'er;
And this alleviates blindness more.
My worthy master finds it best
On my fidelity to rest."

* Lokman was asked who had given him the first principles of wisdom: "It was those blind men," replied he, "who never put down a foot, till they have made sure of their ground, by examining it with their staff."

And thus in thee his fate is bound,
To be misled or haply drown'd?"—
"What? Do I seem a wretch so vile?"—
"No, I'll be sworn thou'rt free of guile,
But ignorance is all thou needest
To plunge in ruin him thou leadest,
Alas! how weak, how foolish they,
Who rather choose to seek their way,
By others' aid, a poor resource!
Than for themselves to grope a course."

THE DISCONTENTED BEE.

A BEE complained to Jupiter of the numerous evils to which her condition was exposed. Her body she said was weak and feeble, yet she was condemned to perpetual toil. She was benumbed by the cold of winter, and relaxed by the heat of summer. Her haunts were infested with poisonous weeds, and her flights obstructed by storms and tempests. In short, what with dangers from without, and diseases from within, her life was rendered one continual scene of wretchedness. "Behold now," said Jupiter, "the frowardness and folly of this unthankful race; The flowers of the field I have spread before them as a feast, and have endeavoured to regale them with an endless variety. They now revel on odoriferous beds of thyme and lavender, and now on the still more fragrant banks of violets and roses. The business they complain of is the extraction of honey: and to alleviate their toil, I have allowed them wings, which readily transport them from one banquet to another. Storms, tempests, and noxious weeds, I have given them sagacity to shun; and, if they are misled, it is through the perverseness of their inclinations. But thus it is with bees, and thus with men; they miscontrue the benevolence of my designs, and then complain that my decrees are rigid: they ungratefully overlook all the advantages, and magnify all the inconveniences of their station. But let my creatures pursue their happiness through the paths marked out by Nature, and they will then feel no pains which they have not pleasures to compensate."

THE BOY AND THE BUTTERFLY.

A BOY, greatly smitten with the colours of a butterfly, pursued it from flower to flower with indefatigable pains. First he aimed to surprise it among the leaves of a rose; then to cover it with his hat as it was feeding on a daisy: now he hoped to secure it as it rested on a sprig of myrtle; and now grew sure of his prize, when he perceived it loitering on a bed of violets. But the fickle fly, continually changing one blossom for another, still eluded his attempts. At length, observing it half buried in the cup of a tulip, he rushed forward, and, snatching it with violence, crushed it to pieces. The dying insect, seeing the poor boy somewhat chagrined, addressed him with all the calmness of a stoic, in the following manner: "Behold now the end of thy unprofitable solicitude! and learn that all pleasure is but a painted butterfly, which, although it may serve to amuse thee in the pursuit, if embraced with too much ardour, will perish in thy grasp."

THE APE AND HER TWO YOUNG ONES

An ape, having two young ones, was dotingly fond of one, but disregarded and slighted the other. One day, she chanced to be surprised by the hunters, and had much ado to get off: however, she did not forget her favourite young one, which she took up in her arms, that it might be the more secure: the other, which she neglected, by natural instinct leaped upon her back, and so away they scampered together. But it unluckily fell out that the dam, in her precipitate flight, blinded with haste, dashed her favourite's head against a stone, and killed it. The hated one, clinging close to her rough back, escaped all the danger of the pursuit.

This Fable is designed to expose the folly of some parents, who, by indulging and humouring favourite children, spoil and ruin them; while those of which they have been the least fond have done well. The child, that knows it can command its parents' affections, will hardly be brought to know how to obey. The fondness of indiscreet parents to favourite children, is blind as love itself: they are so far from seeing any blemishes or imperfections in them, that their very deformity is beauty, and all their ugly tricks graces. Thus, without ever being checked and corrected in their faults, but rather caressed for them, when they come abroad upon the theatre of the world, what rock will they split upon? while the child, who is so happy to escape these very tender regards, these pernicious indulgences, is obliged to be good and honest in its own defence. The parent looks upon it with an eye clear from the mist of fondness. He has no regard to its dislike or approbation, but for his own cre.it puts it into such a way of education as reason dictates, and forces it to be as accomplished as its capacity will admit.

MERCURY AND THE SCULPTOR.

Mercury having a mind to know how much he was esteemed among men, transformed himself into the shape of one, and, going into a sculptor's shop where little images were to be sold, saw Jupiter, Juno, himself, and most of the other gods and goddesses. Pretending that he wanted to buy, he said to the sculptor: "What do you ask for this?" pointing to the figure of Jupiter. "A groat," said the other. "And what for that?" meaning Juno. "I must have something more for that," said he. "Well, and what's the price of this?" asked Mercury, nodding his head at himself. "Why," replied the man, "if you are in earnest and will buy the two, I will throw you that into the bargain."

Nothing makes a man so cheap and little, in the eyes of discerning people, as his enquiring after his own worth, and wanting to know what value others set upon him. He that often busies himself in stating the account of his own merit, will probably employ his thoughts upon a very barren subject; those who are full of themselves being generally the emptiest fellows. Some are so vain as to hunt for praise, and lay traps for commendation; which when they do, it is a pity but they should meet with the same disappointment as Mercury in the Fable. He that behaves himself as he should do, will not fail of procuring a good share of respect, or of raising a fair and flourishing reputation. These are the insepa.able attendants of those that do well, and follow the man that acquits himself handsomely. But they should never be the end or motive of our pursuits; our principal aim should be—the welfare and happiness of our country, our friends, and ourselves; and that should be directed by the rules of honour and virtue. As long as we do this, we need not be concerned what the world thinks of us, for a curiosity of that kind does but prevent what it most desires to obtain. Fame, in this respect, is like a whimsical mistress; flying from those who pursue her most, and following such as shew the least regard to her.

THE COLT AND THE FARMER.

A COLT, for blood and mettled speed
The choicest of the running breed,
Of youthful strength and beauty vain,
Refused subjection to the rein.
In vain the groom's officious skill
Opposed his pride and checked his will,
In vain the master's forming care
Restrained with threats, or soothed with prayer;
Of freedom proud, and scorning man,
Wild o'er the spacious plain he ran.
Where'er luxuriant Nature spread
Her flowery carpet o'er the mead,
Or bubbling streams soft gliding pass,
To cool and freshen up the grass,
Disdaining bounds he cropped the blade,
And wantoned in the spoil he made.
In plenty thus the summer past;
Revolving winter came at last;
The trees no more a shelter yield,
The verdure withers from the field,
Perpetual snows infest the ground,
In icy chains the streams are bound,
Cold nipping winds and rattling hail
His lank, unsheltered sides assail.
As round he cast his rueful eyes,
He saw the thatched-roof cottage rise;
The prospect touched his heart with cheer,
And promised kind deliverance near.
A stable, erst his scorn and hate,
Was now become his wished retreat:
His passion cooled, his pride forgot,
A farmer's welcome yard he sought.
The master saw his woeful plight,
His limbs that totter'd with his weight,
And friendly to the stable led,
And saw him littered, dressed, and fed.
In slothful ease all night he lay;
The servants rose at break of day;
The market calls; along the road
His back must bear the ponderous load:
In vain he struggles or complains,
Incessant blows reward his pains.
To-morrow varies but his toil;
Chained to the plough he breaks the soil,

While scanty meals at night repay
The painful labours of the day.
Subdued by toil, with anguish rent,
His self-upbraidings found a vent:
"Wretch that I am!" he sighing said,
"By arrogance and folly led.
Had but my restive youth been brought
To learn the lesson Nature taught,
Then had I, like my sires of yore,
The prize from every courser bore;
While man bestowed rewards and praise,
And females crowned my latter days:
Now lasting servitude's my lot,
My birth contemned, my speed forgot;
Doomed am I for my pride to bear
A living death, from year to year."

THE FISHERMAN

A CERTAIN fisherman having laid his nets in the river, and encompassed the whole stream from one side to the other, took a long pole and began beating the water to make the fish strike into his nets. One of the neighbours living thereabouts, seeing him do this, wondered what he meant, and, going up to him: "Friend," said he, "what are you doing here? Do you think it is to be suffered that you shall stand splashing and dashing the water, and making it so muddy that it is not fit for use? Who do you think can live at this rate?" He was going on with great heat, when the other interrupted him, and replied: "I do not much trouble myself how you are to live with my doing this, but I assure you I cannot live without it."

This Fable is levelled at those, who, as the proverb says, "love to fish in troubled waters." There are some men of such execrable principles, that they do not care what mischief or what confusion they occasion in the world, provided they may but gratify some little, selfish appetite. A thief will set a whole street on fire, to get an opportunity of robbing one house; an ill-natured person will kindle the flame of discord among friends and neighbours, purely to satisfy his own malicious temper. And, among the great, there are those who, to succeed in their ambitious designs, will make no scruple of involving their country in divisions and animosities at home, and sometimes in war and bloodshed abroad; provided they do but maintain themselves in power, they care not what havoc and desolation they bring on the rest of mankind. All around them may be confounded with faction and party-rage, it occasions them not the least remorse or compassion. The widow's tears, the orphan's cries, and the sighs of despair itself cannot affect them. Like the fisherman in the Fable, they boldly pursue their sport, and only reply: "It must be so, because we cannot live as we do without it." What brutish unsociable sentiments are these, such as a mere state of nature would scarcely suggest! Those that have any traces of equity in their breasts, or any regard for the rights of mankind, should enter their protest against such notions, and oppose the practice of them with all their might and strength.



THE MISER AND HIS TREASURE.

THE MISER AND HIS TREASURE.

A MISER having scraped together a considerable sum of money, by denying himself the common conveniences of life, was much embarrassed where to lodge it most securely. After many perplexing debates with himself, he at length fixed upon a corner in a retired field, where he deposited his treasure, and with it his heart, in a hole which he dug for that purpose. His mind was now for a moment at ease; but he had not proceeded many paces on his way home, when all his anxiety returned; and he could not forbear going back to see that every thing was safe. He repeated his visits daily, and sometimes more than once in the day, till at last he was observed by a labourer who was mending a hedge in an adjacent meadow. The fellow, concluding that something extraordinary must be the occasion of these frequent visitations, marked the spot; and, coming in the night to examine it, discovered the prize, and bore it off unmolested. Early the next morning, the miser again renewed his visit; when finding his treasure gone, he broke out into the most bitter exclamations. A traveller, who happened to be passing by at the time, was moved by his complaints to enquire into the cause of them. "Alas!" replied the miser, "I have sustained the most cruel and irreparable loss. Some villain has robbed me of a sum of money, which, a short time ago I buried under this stone."—"Buried!" returned the traveller with surprise; "a very extraordinary method truly of disposing of your riches. Why did you not rather keep them in your house, that they might be ready for your daily occasions?"—"Daily occasions!" resumed the miser, with an air of much indignation; "do you imagine I know so little the value of money, as to suffer it to be run away with by occasions? On the contrary, I had prudently resolved not to touch a single shilling of it?"—"If that was your wise resolution," answered the traveller, "I see no sort of reason for your being thus afflicted. It is but putting this stone in the place of your treasure, and paying the same daily devotions to it, it will answer all your purposes fully as well, and you will continue to be as rich as ever."

THE STARS AND THE SKY-ROCKET.

As a rocket, on a night of rejoicing, ascended through the air, and observed the stream of light that distinguished his passage, he could not forbear exulting in his elevation, and calling upon the stars to do him reverence. "Behold," said he, "what gazing multitudes admire the lustre of my train, whilst all your feeble sparks of light pass unobserved, or disregarded!" The stars heard this empty boast with silent indignation: the Dog-star only vouchsafed to answer him. "How weak are they," said he, "who value themselves on the voice of popular applause! It is true, the novelty of thy appearance may procure to thee more admiration from vulgar minds than our daily splendours can attract, although indeed a lasting miracle. But do not estimate thy importance by the capricious fancy of ill-judging mortals. Know thyself to be the gaudy pageant of a few moments, the transient gaze of a giddy and ignorant multitude. Even while I speak thy blaze is half extinguished, and thou art at this instant sinking into perpetual oblivion. Whereas our fires are lighted up by Heaven for the admiration and advantage of the universe; and our glory shall endure for ever."

THE VULTURE AND THE TORTOISE.

A FAMISH'D vulture, from the skies,
On earth a crawling tortoise spies:
"Oho!" he says, "it stirs—'tis game!"
Then darts, and, swift as lightning's flame,
He pounces on the sluggish creature;
Who, opportunely warned by nature,
Composed and snug, its head and claws
Within its bony rampart draws.
Now, who's the fool? The prowler sure—
Who must the sad repulse endure
To find himself so vilely placed
Upon a back in armour cased.
"Shall this insulting reptile, cag'd
Within its wall," he cries, enraged,
"Laugh at my efforts? shall my beak
In vain attempt its mail to break?"
Thus speaking, pride and vengeful ire
His breast with raging transports fire;
He madly strikes his prudent foe,
With rising fury blow on blow.
And what's his gain? The gain of those
Whom casual trifles discompose.
He breaks his beak, his talons strains;
And only loses time and pains.
Sir Vulture's head was surely muddied,
And had not Antoninus studied.
His was an error of the great;
The error too of childhood's state
'Tis worse than death their will to thwart;
And, while inpatience fires their heart,
They even the book of fate would tear:
But all their rage its leaves can bear,
Which, made of brass, defy attack;
'Tis just the turtle's marble back.

THE BOY AND THE FILBERTS.

A CERTAIN boy, as Epictetus tells the Fable, put his hand into a pitcher, where great plenty of figs and filberts were deposited: he grasped as many as his fist could possibly hold, but when he endeavoured to pull it out, the narrowness of the neck prevented him. Unwilling to lose any of them, but unable to draw back his hand, he burst into tears, and bitterly bemoaned his hard fortune. An honest fellow who stood by, gave him this wise and seasonable advice: "Grasp only half the quantity, my boy, and you will easily succeed."

THE DISCONTENTED SQUIRREL.

In a pleasant wood, on the western side of a ridge of mountains, there lived a squirrel, who had passed two or three years of his life very happily. At length he began to grow discontented, and one day fell into the following soliloquy.

"What, must I spend all my time in this spot, running up and down the same trees, gathering nuts and acorns, and dozing away months together in a hole! I see a great many of the birds which inhabit this wood, ramble about to a distance, wherever their fancy leads them; and, at the approach of winter, set out for some remote country, where they enjoy summer-weather all the year round. My neighbour Cuckoo tells me he is just going; and even little Nightingale will soon follow. To be sure, I have not wings like them, but I have legs nimble enough; and, if one does not use them, one might as well be a mole or a dormouse. I dare say I could easily reach to that blue ridge, which I see from the tops of the trees; which, no doubt, must be a fine place, for the sun comes directly from it every morning, and it often appears all covered with red and yellow and the finest colours imaginable. There can be no harm, at least, in trying, for I can soon get back again if I don't like it. I am resolved to go, and I will set out to-morrow morning."

When the squirrel had taken this resolution, he could not sleep all night for thinking of it; and, at peep of day, prudently taking with him as much provision as he could conveniently carry, he began his journey in high spirits. He presently got to the outside of the wood, and entered upon the open moors that reached to the foot of the hills These he crossed before the sun had risen high; and, then having eaten his breakfast with an excellent appetite, he began to ascend. It was heavy toilsome work, scrambling up the steep sides of the mountains; but the squirrel was used to climbing, and, for a while, he proceeded expeditiously. Often, however, he was obliged to stop and take breath: so that it was a good deal past noon before he had arrived at the summit of the first cliff. Here he sat down to eat his dinner; and looking back, was wonderfully pleased with the fine prospect. The wood in which he lived, lay far beneath his feet; and he viewed with scorn the humble habitation in which he had been born and bred.

When he looked forward, however he was somewhat discouraged to observe that another eminence rose above him, full as distant as that which he had already reached; and he now began to feel stiff and fatigued. However, after a little rest, he set out again, though not so briskly as before. The ground was rugged, brown, and bare; and to his great surprise, instead of finding it warmer as he got nearer the sun, he felt it grow colder and colder. He had not travelled two hours before his strength and spirits were almost spent; and he seriously thought of giving up the point, and returning before night should come on. While he was thus deliberating with himself, clouds began to gather round the mountain, and to take away all view of distant objects. Presently a storm of mingled snow and hail came down, driven by a violent wind, which pelted the poor squirrel most pitifully, and made him quite unable to move forwards or backwards. Besides, he had completely lost his road, and did not know which way to turn towards that despised home which it was now his only desire again to reach.

'The storm lasted till the approach of darkness; and it was as much as he could do, benumbed and weary as he was, to crawl to the hollow of a rock at some distance, which was the best lodging he could find for the night. His provisions were spent; so that, hungry and shivering, he crept into the furthest corner of the cavern, and rolling himself up, with his bushy tail over his back, he got a little sleep, though disturbed by the cold, and the shrill whistling of the wind among the stones.

The morning broke over the distant tops of the mountains, when the squirrel, half frozen and famished, came out of his lodging and advanced, as well as he could, towards the brow of the hill, that he might discover which way to take. As he was slowly creeping along, a hungry kite, soaring in the air above, descried him, and making a stoop, carried him off in her talons. The poor squirrel, losing his senses with the fright, was borne away with vast rapidity, and seemed inevitably doomed to become food for the kite's young ones; when an eagle, who had seen the kite seize her prey, pursued in order to take it from her. and overtaking, gave her such a buffet, as caused her to drop the squirrel, in order to defend herself. The poor animal kept falling through the air a long time, till at last he alighted in the midst of a thick tree, the leaves and tender boughs of which so broke his fall, that, though stunned and breathless, he escaped without material injury, and after lying awhile, came to himself again. But what was his pleasure and surprise, to find himself in the very tree that contained his nest. "Ah!" said he, "my dear native place and peaceful home! If ever I am tempted to leave you, may I undergo a second time, all the miseries and dangers from which I have now so wonderfully escaped."

PROMETHEUS.

PROMETHEUS formed man of the finest clay, and animated his work with fire stolen from Heaven. He endowed him with all the faculties to be found among the animal creation, gave him the courage of the lion, the subtlety of the fox, the providence of the ant, and the industry of the bee, and enabled him, by the superiority of his understanding, to subdue them all, and to make them subservient to his use and pleasure. He discovered to him the metals hidden in the bowels of the earth, and shewed him their several uses. He instructed him in everything that might tend to cultivate and civilize human life; taught him to till the ground, and to improve the fertility of nature; to build houses, to cover himself with garments, and to defend himself against the inclemencies of the air and the seasons; to compound medicines of salutary herbs, to heal wounds, and to cure diseases; to construct ships, to cross the seas, and to communicate to every country the riches of all. In a word, he endowed him with sense and memory, with sagacity and invention, with art and science; and to crown all, gave him an insight into futurity. But, alas! this latter gift, instead of improving, wholly destroyed the proper effect of all the former. Furnished with all the means and instruments of happiness, man nevertheless was miserable; through the knowledge and dread of future evil, he was incapable of enjoying present good. Prometheus saw, and resolved to remedy this inconvenience; he effectually restored man to a capacity for happiness, by depriving him of prescience, and giving him hope in its stead.

THE RAT WITH A BELL.

A LARGE old house in the country was so extremely infested with rats, that nothing could be secured from their depredations. They scaled the walls to attack flitches of bacon, though hung as high as the ceiling. Hanging shelves afforded no protection to the cheese and pastry. They penetrated by sap into the store-room, and plundered it of preserves and sweat-meats. They gnawed through cupboard doors, undermined floors, and ran in races behind the wainscots. The cats could not get at them: they were too cunning and too well fed to meddle with poison; and traps only now and then caught a heedless straggler. One of these, however, on being taken, was the occasion of practising a new device. This was, to fasten a collar with a small bell about the prisoner's neck, and then turn him loose again.

Overjoyed at the recovery of his liberty, the rat ran into the nearest hole, and went in search of his companions. They heard at a distance, the bell, tinkle, tinkle, through the dark passages, and suspecting some enemy had got among them, away they scoured, some one way, and some another. The bell-bearer pursued; and soon guessing the cause of their flight, he was greatly amused by it. Wherever he approached, it was all hurry scurry, and not a tail of them was to be seen. He chased his old friends from hole to hole, and room to room, laughing all the while at their fears, and increasing them by all the means in his power. "That's right," quoth he, "the fewer the better cheer." So he rioted alone among the good things, and stuffed till he could hardly walk.

For two or three days this course of life passed on very pleasantly. He ate, and ate, and played the bugbear to perfection. At length he grew tired of this lonely condition, and longed to mix with his old companions again upon the former footing. But the difficulty was, how to get rid of his bell. He pulled and tugged with his fore-feet, and almost wore the skin off his neck in the attempt, but in vain. The bell was now his plague and torment. He wandered from room to room earnestly desiring to make himself known to one of his companions, but they all kept out of his reach. At last, as he was moping about disconsolate, he fell in Puss's way, and was devoured in an instant.

He who is raised so much above his fellow creatures as to be the object of their terror, must suffer for it in losing all the comforts of society. He is a solitary being in the midst of crowds. He keeps them at a distance, and they equally shun him. Dread and affection cannot subsist together.

THE WATER-SNAKE.

JOVE had at length granted the frogs another king; instead of a peaceable log, a greedy water-snake.

"If you wish to be our king," said the frogs, "why do you devour us?"— "Because," replied the snake, "you petitioned for me."

"I never petitioned for you!" cried one of the frogs, which the snake had already swallowed in imagination. "No?" said the water-snake, "so much the worse. Then I must make a point of devouring you for not having done so."

THE DONKIES.

The donkies complained before Jupiter that they were treated too cruelly by mankind. "Our strong backs," said they, "carry their burdens, which would overwhelm them, and every weaker animal. And still, by unmerciful blows, they would compel us to go at a speed which is rendered impossible by our great burdens, even if it had not been denied us by Nature. Forbid them, Jove, to be so unreasonable, if mankind will allow itself to be forbidden aught wicked. We will serve them, since it seems you have created us for that purpose; but we will not submit to be beaten without cause."

"My creatures," replied Jupiter, addressing their spokesman, "your petition is just; but I see no possibility of convincing mankind that your natural slowness does not arise from idleness. And as long as they believe this, you will be thrashed. But I have thought of a means of lightening your griefs. From the present moment I will diminish your sense of feeling: your hide shall be hardened to resist the blows, and to fatigue the arm of the driver."

"Jove," shouted the donkies, "you are ever wise and merciful!" They went rejoicing from his throne, as from the seat of universal love.

THE MAGPIE AND THE RAVEN.

There was a certain magpie, more busy and more loquacious than any of his tribe. His tongue was in perpetual motion, and himself continually upon the wing, fluttering from place to place, and very seldom appearing twice in the same company. Sometimes you saw him with a flock of pigeons, plundering a field of new-sown corn; now perched upon a cherry-tree, with a parcel of tom-tits; the next moment, you would be surprised to find the same individual bird engaged with a flight of crows, and feasting upon a carcase.

He took it one day into his head to visit an old raven, who lived retired among the branches of a venerable oak; and there, at the foot of a lonely mountain, had passed near half a century. "I admire," said the prating bird, "your most romantic situation, and the wildness of these rocks and precipices around you. I am absolutely transported with the murmur of that water-fall; methinks it diffuses a tranquillity surpassing all the joys of public life. What an agreeable sequestration from wordly bustle and impertinence! What an opportunity of contemplating the divine beauties of nature! I shall most certainly quit the gaieties of town; and for the sake of these rural scenes, and my good friend's conversation, pass the remainder of my days in the solitude he has chosen."—"Well, sir." replied the raven, "I shall be at all times glad to receive you in my old fashioned way; but you and I would certainly prove most unsuitable companions. Your whole ambition is to shine in company, and to recommend yourself to the world by universal complaisance: whereas, my greatest happiness consists in ease and privacy, and the select conversation of a few, whom I esteem. I prefer a good heart to the most voluble tongue; and though much obliged to you for the politeness of your professions, yet I see your benevolence divided among so numerous an acquaintance, that a very slender share of it can remain for those you are pleased to honour with the name of friends."

THE RAVEN AND THE FOX.

A RAVEN bore away a bit of poisoned meat in his claws, which an enraged gardener had intended for his neighbours' cats.

He was just preparing to devour it on an old oak, when Renard approaching said to him: "Heaven be praised, bird of Jove!"—"What do you take me for?" asked the raven. "What do I take you for?" replied the fox; "are you not the soaring eagle, who daily descends from the right hand of Jupiter to alight on this oak, and feed a poor wretch like me? Why do you deny yourself? Do I not see in your victorious talons the supplicated gift, which your god continues to send me through you?"

The raven was astonished, and inwardly rejoiced at being taken for an eagle. "I must not," thought he, "enlighten the fox on his mistake." Stupidly generous, he let fall his prey, and flew proudly on.

The fox seized the flesh laughing, and devoured it with malicious joy. But this soon gave way to dreadful pangs; the poison commenced taking effect, and he expired.

Accursed flatterers, may your praises never procure aught for you but poison!

THE JEWELLER AND THE LACE-MAKER.

IN cottage neat, of lowly race,
Lived one who fabricated lace,
And near her, miserly and old,
A tradesman dwelt who worked in gold.
"Dame," quoth the jeweller one day,
"'Tis strange to me that folks should pay
Such prices for thy lace per ell,
Whilst I so ill my fringes sell,
Though, by the village train, 'tis said,
Gold is more precious deemed than thread."
To whom the dame, "My friend, you'll find
To different views are men inclined;
Some in those articles delight,
Which taste and elegance unite,
While others, fond of pomp and show,
On finery their thoughts bestow;
Now if the lovely fair incline
My works to value more than thine,
Though I acknowledge it is said,
Gold is more precious deemed than thread,
From this the preference may arise,
Some neatness more than splendour prize,
And hence, my laces more admire,
Than all thy gold and silver wire."

THE FARMER AND HIS THREE ENEMIES.

A WOLF, a fox, and a hare, happened one evening to be foraging in different parts of a farm-yard. Their first effort was pretty successful, and they returned in safety to their several quarters, not so happy, however, as to be unperceived by the farmer's watchful eye; who, placing several kinds of snares, made each his prisoner in the next attempt. He first took the hare to task, who confessed she had eaten a few turnip-tops, merely to satisfy her hunger, besought him piteously to spare her life, and promised never to enter his grounds again. He then accosted the fox, who, in a fawning, obsequious tone, protested that he came into the premises, through no other motive than pure good will, to restrain the hares and other vermin from the plunder of his corn; and that, whatever evil tongues might say, he had too great a regard both for him and for justice to be capable of any dishonest action. He last of all questioned the wolf, on the business that brought him into the purlieus of a farmer's yard? The wolf very impudently declared, it was with a view of destroying his lambs, to which he had an undoubted right; that the farmer himself was the only felon, who robbed the community of wolves of what was meant to be their proper food. That this, at least, was his opinion; and that, whatever fate awaited him, he should not scruple to risk his life in pursuit of his lawful prey. The farmer, having heard their pleas, determined their cause in the following manner: "The hare," said he, "deserves compassion, for the humble penitence she shews, and the frank confession she has made. As for the fox and wolf, let them be hanged together. Criminals alike with respect to the fact, they have alike heightened their equal guilt by the aggravations of hypocrisy and impudence."

THE PLOUGHMAN AND FORTUNE.

A PLOUGHMAN, as he was ploughing the ground found a treasure. Transported with joy, he immediately began to return thanks to the ground, which had been so liberal and kind to him. Fortune observing what he did, could not forbear expressing her resentment. She instantly appeared to him, and said: "Fool, what a blockhead you are to be thanking the ground thus, and to take no notice of me! Sot! if you had lost such a treasure, instead of finding it, I should have been the first you would have laid the blame upon."

If our affairs succeed and go well, we ought to let them have the credit of it to whose interest it is chiefly owing, and with whom, upon any miscarriage or ill-management, we should have found fault. That noble rule of equity, "to do as we would be done unto," should, as nearly as we can, be observed in every action of our lives. But vanity and peevishness dispose us too often to break it: one makes us ascribe that to our own address which often is owing to some accident; the other puts us upon charging Fortune, or anybody but ourselves, with the ill-success for which we may probably be indebted to our own stupidity and negligence only. What titles of honour, and stations of dignity, what places of profit in church and state, are now and then possessed by dull creatures, who never once dreamt that they were obliged to Fortune alone for their happiness in obtaining them. Yet, if the case were quite otherwise, if those places had been filled with men of known abilities, and those persons left low and undistinguished as their own merit, it is ten to one but they would have cursed their stars, fretted at their ill luck, and stormed at the barbarous treatment of capricious Fortune.



THE DOG AND THE SHADOW.

THE DOG AND THE SHADOW.

THERE was, upon a time, an envious cur,
Who could not bear that joy should reach his neighbours:
And who, without a want, would oft demur—
That other dogs lived better by their labours;
His kennel was all fenced from wind and weather;
His platter was replenished oft and well;
And then, for months, he had no chain nor tether,
But roam'd at large through city, wood and dell.

Can you, good sir, conceive a happier station,
Than to be bless'd thus, without debt or dun;
To fear no fall of stocks nor of the Nation,
No change of anything beneath the sun?—
With happy fortune ever on him shining,—
With bed and board at will, and nought to pay:
Who would have thought to find our cur repining,
Like one without resource from day to day?

But there's a spirit both in dogs and men,
That prompts incessant and insatiate craving;
Which makes another's egg a good fat hen,
And all we have ourselves seems scarce worth having
The instances we might adduce are many,
From Æsop's days to those in which we live,
But as grim Pompey's case is good as any,—
Why that's the only one we mean to give.

As Pompey, then, was by a brook returning
From an accustomed haunt, one afternoon,
It happened in a month renowned for turning
The brains of maids and puppies—sultry June;—
Pompey had, that day, got an old maid's benison,
Because he was so plump, and sleek, and trim,
And bore, on his return, a haunch of venison,
Which Epicurus' self might envy him.

"He had been happy," as some Rhymester sings,
Had nobody but he such cheer possessed;
But how, the choicest of all earthly things,
Could he with others share, and yet be blessed?
Pompey, from side to side, as home he waddled,
Cast ever and anon a searching glance,
And snarled and growled, as o'er his prize he straddled,
Suspicious of some hostile cur's advance.

For, be't remembered, Pompey was o'erloaded,
And could not without trouble look behind :
And there were dogs abroad by hunger goaded,
Whose honour was not of the trustiest kind.
And, certes, he had cause to look about him;
For, lo! beside him stalked another dog,
Who, purposely to anger or to flout him,
Bore in his mouth the twin of Pompey's prog.

So Pompey, as we said, both snarled and grumbled,
Then paused to think of some uncivil thing;
Till, quite resolved the mimic should be humbled,
He pounced upon him with a tiger's spring!
But now, the charm was instantly dispelled,
The illusion vanished like a last-night's dream;
His own reflection while our hero quelled,
He dropped his savoury substance in the stream.

And thus it is with men—our hopes and pleasures,
By idle fears and fancies, aye are swayed:
The mind can only deem as sterling treasure,
Things which our own contentment such have made.
The Poet and the Painter blow one bubble,
Another lures the Warrior to his trade;
E'en Kings and Statesmen take a world of trouble,
To o'erreach other folks, and clasp—a shade!

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A FLOCK of sheep were feeding in a meadow, while their dogs were asleep, and their shepherd at a distance, playing on his pipe beneath the shade of a spreading elm. A young inexperienced lamb, observing a half-starved wolf peeping through the pales of the enclosure, entered into conversation with him: "Pray, what are you seeking for here?" said the lamb. "I am looking," replied the wolf, "for some tender grass; for nothing, you know, is more pleasant than to feed in a fresh pasture, and to slake one's thirst in a crystal stream, both of which I perceive you enjoy within these pales in the utmost perfection. Happy creature," continued he, "how much I envy your lot! who are in full possession of the utmost I desire; for philosophy has long taught me to be satisfied with a little." —"It seems then," returned the lamb, "those who say you feed on flesh, accuse you falsely, since a little grass will easily content you. If this be true, let us for the future live like brethren, and feed together." So saying, the simple lamb imprudently crept through the fence, and became at once a prey to our pretended philosopher, and a sacrifice to his own inexperience and credulity

THE HARE AND THE WOLF.

As a hungry wolf was running across the plain in search of food, he saw a hare fast asleep under a thicket, and lost in forgetfulness of all around her: thinking what a nice meal she would make, he began to creep slowly up, with his mouth open, ready to snap her: but his panting awoke her, and she jumped up and tried to run away. The wolf was so close to her, though, that she could not escape; so she stood trembling before him. "Ho, ho! my dear," said the wolf, "have I found you at last? I have been longing to see you, and have looked for you under every bush, till I was quite tired."—"Oh, dear!" said the hare, "I hope you will not think of eating up such a poor little creature as I am. But I know of a fine fat fox in the next wood, that would make a nice breakfast for you: and if you please to come along with me, I think I can entice him into your clutches." The greedy wolf was delighted with the proposal, so they went to the wood together. When they reached the hole where Renard resided, the wolf stayed outside, while the hare entered a little way, and very politely wished the fox good morning. "What a time it is," said the latter, "since I have had the pleasure of seeing you! I hope you have not been ill."—"Thank you," replied the hare, "I have been quite well; but, really, the care of a large family takes up so much time, that I can hardly get out to nibble a bit of fresh grass upon the hill, and never think of making a call; and, besides, we have had to move lately. But I have just stepped in to let you know that a friend of mine, who has heard a great deal of your wisdom and sagacity, wishes very much for your advice in a great difficulty; and, I hope, out of friendship to me, you will allow me to introduce him." The fox, although he was wide awake to the whole scheme, returned thanks for the intended honour; adding, how proud he should be to entertain any friend of her's, and merely requesting a few minutes to put his house in order. So the wolf and the hare retired to a little distance, in high glee, waiting to be called in. Now the fox, with a great deal of forethought, had long ago made a secret passage, by which he could at any time escape; and had dug a pit in the middle of his dwelling, and covered it with some sticks and dry grass. As soon as the hare was gone, he put the sticks in order, so that they might give way at the least touch; and shook up the grass a little; and then, getting into the secret passage, called out to them to walk in. The hare made a jump, and the wolf made a bound, and both alighting upon the sticks, tumbled headlong into the pit; while the fox, politely bidding them good morning went out for a walk. As soon as the wolf recovered from his surprise, he seized the hare, and accusing her of having laid this trap for him, instantly devoured her.

THE BOYS AND THE FROGS.

On the margin of a large lake, which was inhabited by a great number of frogs, a company of boys happened to be at play. Their diversion was duck and drake; and whole vollies of stones were thrown into the water, to the great annoyance and danger of the poor terrified frogs. At length one of the most hardy, lifting up, his head above the surface of the lake; "Ah! dear children," said he, "why will you learn so soon the cruel practices of your race? Consider, I beseech you, that though this may be sport to you, it is death to us."

THE ELEPHANTS AND THEIR MASTER.

WITHIN Golconda's rich domain,
The royal elephants to train—
To be their tutor, is a post
All aim at, and are proud to boast.
An alien once to this was named;
And deeply was the measure blamed,
But still in murmured talk, for there
The injured must in silence bear,
Or right or wrong, the king's behest:
Submission there is ever best.
This stranger by the prince preferred,
Was of the base jack-pudding herd,
Who dance on ropes, or spin a sieve
By sorcery, as the clowns believe.
The juggler had from Europe brought
A dog so singularly taught,
So perfect in acquired lore,
His like had ne'er been seen before.
The prince, perceiving how the rogue,
With skilful care had trained his dog,
Judged he would better still succeed
With creatures of a nobler breed;
And now the elephantine band
Are trusted to the juggler's hand,
The sum of whose scholastic course
Was beating, starving, fear and force.
The whole he tried—but tried in vain;
A wretched end was all his gain.
The elephants, a generous race,
Scorn to submit to treatment base;
The master storms—their fury boils;
One round him his proboscis coils,
Whirls him through air in direful heat,
And tramples him beneath his feet.
This done; the elephants avenged,
From rage again to mildness changed.
An Indian next the charge obtained,
Whose kind respect their duty gained:
For kind respect was all his art;
And 'twas enough—it won the heart.
The docile troop behind him trod,
Obeyed his glance, and watched his nod.
The prince from thence a lesson took;
And, better than by many a book,
Was taught the sole successful art
Of governing a generous heart.

THE BEAR AND THE BEE-HIVES.

A BEAR, climbing over the fence into a place where bees were kept, began to plunder the hives, and rob them of their honey. But the bees, to revenge the injury, attacked him in a whole swarm together; and, though they were not able to pierce his rugged hide, yet, with their little stings they so annoyed his eyes and nostrils, that, unable to endure the smarting pain, with impatience he tore the skin over his ears with his own claws, and suffered ample punishment for the injury he did the bees in breaking open their waxen cell.

Many and great are the injuries of which some men are guilty towards others, for the sake of gratifying some liquorish appetite. For there are those who would not stick at bringing desolation upon their country, and run the hazard of their own necks into the bargain, rather than baulk a wicked inclination, either of cruelty, ambition, or avarice. But it were to be wished all who are hurried by such blind impulses, would consider a moment before they proceed to irrevocable execution. Injuries and wrongs not only call for revenge and reparation with the voice of equity itself, but oftentimes carry their punishment along with them; and, by an unforeseen train of events, are retorted on the head of the actor of them; and not seldom, from a deep remorse, expiated upon himself by his own hand.

THE FORESTER AND THE LION.

A FORESTER meeting with a lion one day, they discoursed together for awhile without differing much in opinion. At last, a dispute happening to arise about the superiority between a man and a lion, the man, wanting a better argument, shewed the lion a marble monument, on which was placed the statue of a man striding over a vanquished lion. "If this," said the lion, "is all you have to say for it, let us be the carvers, and we will make the lion striding over the man."

Contending parties are very apt to appeal for the truth to records written by their own side; but nothing is more unfair, and at the same time insignificant and unconvincing. Such is the partiality of mankind in favour of themselves and their own actions, that it is almost impossible to come to any certainty by reading the accounts which are written on one side only. We have few or no memoirs come down to us of what was transacted in the world during the sovereignty of ancient Rome, but what were written by those who were dependent upon it; therefore it is no wonder that they appear, upon most occasions, to have been so great and glorious a nation. What their contemporaries of other countries thought of them we cannot tell, otherwise than from their own writers. It is not impossible but they might have described them as a barbarous, rapacious, treacherous, unpolite people; who upon their conquest of Greece, for some time made as great havoc and destruction of the arts and science, as their fellow plunderers, the Goths and Vandals did afterwards in Italy. What monsters would our own party-zealots make of each other if the transactions of the times were to be handed down to posterity by a warm-hearted man on either side? and, were such records to survive for two or three centuries, with what perplexities and difficulties must they embarrass a young historian, as by turns he consulted them for the characters of his great forefathers? If it should so happen, it were to be wished the above Fable might be extant at the same time, that young readers, instead of doubting to which they should give their credit, would not fail to reflect which was the work of a man, and which that of a lion.

THE MONKEY AND THE CAT.

An ape and cat, in roguery and fun
  Sworn brothers twain, both owned a common master,
Whatever mischief in the house was done,
  By Pug and Tom contrived was each disaster.
The feat performed, in chimney-corner snug,
With face demure, sat cunning Tom and Pug.

By Tom were mice and rats but rarely taken,
  A duck or chicken better met his wishes;
More than the rats Tom gnawed the cheese and bacon;
  'Twas Pug's delight to break the china dishes,
And on the choicest viands oft a guttler,
Still made it seem the footman or the butler.

One winter's day was seen this hopeful pair
  Close to the kitchen-fire, as usual, posted.
Amongst the red-hot coals the cook with care
  Had plac'd some nice plump chesnuts to be roasted,
From whence in smoke a pungent odour rose,
Whose oily fragrance struck the monkey's nose.

"Tom!" says sly Pug: "pray could not you and I
  Share this dessert the cook is pleased to cater?
Had I such claws as your's, I'd quickly try:
  Lend me a hand—'twill be a *coup-de-maître*:"
So said, he seized his colleague's ready paw,
Pulled out the fruit, and crammed it in his jaw.

Now came the shining priestess of the fane,
  And off in haste the two marauders scampered.
Tom for his share of the plunder had the pain,
  Whilst Pug his palate with the dainties pampered.
Pug had the prize; Tom gained at least the learning,
That Pug loved nuts, and gave his friend the burning.

THE TROUTS AND THE GUDGEON.

A fisherman in the month of May stood angling on the bank of the Thames with an artificial fly. He threw his bait with so much art, that a young trout was rushing towards it, when she was prevented by her mother. "Never," said she, "my child, be too precipitate, where there is a possibility of danger. Take due time to consider, before you risk an action that may be fatal. How know you whether yon appearance be indeed a fly, or the snare of an enemy? Let some one else make the experiment before you. If it be a fly, he will very probably elude the first attack: and the second may be made, if not with success, at least with safety." She had no sooner spoken, than a gudgeon seized the pretended fly, and became an example to the giddy daughter of the importance of her mother's counsel.

THE MERCHANT-SHEPHERD.

A SHEPHERD, who kept his sheep near the sea, drove them one clear summer's day, close to the shore, and sat down upon a piece of rock, to enjoy the cool breeze that came from the water. The green element appeared calm and smooth; and Thetis, with her train of beautiful, smiling nymphs, seemed to dance upon the floating surface of the deep. The shepherd's heart thrilled with secret pleasure, and he began to wish for the life of a merchant. "O how happy," said he, "should I be to plough this liquid plain, in a tight vessel of my own! and to visit the remote parts of the world, instead of sitting idly here, looking upon a parcel of senseless sheep while they are grazing. Then what ample returns should I make in the way of traffic! and what a short and certain path would this be to riches and honour!" In short, this thought was improved into a resolution; away he posted with all expedition, sold his flock and all that he had; bought a bark, and fitted it out for a voyage. He loaded it with a cargo of dates, and set sail for the coast of Asia. He had not long been at sea, before the wind began to blow tempestuously, and the waves to rage and swell to such a degree, that his ship was in danger of sinking, and he was obliged to lighten her, by throwing all his dates overboard; the vessel was then driven upon a rock near the shore, and split to pieces; he himself hardly escaping with life. Poor and destitute of subsistence, he applied himself to the man who had bought his flock, and was admitted to tend it as a hireling.

He sat in the same place as before, and the ocean again looked calm and smooth. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "deceitful, tempting element, in vain you try to engage me a second time; my misfortunes have left me too poor to be again deluded in the same way; and experience has made me wise enough to resolve, whatever my condition may be, never to trust to thy faithless bosom more."

Bought wit is the best; and the greater the variety of disappointments we meet with, the greater will be our experience, and the better shall we be qualified to get through the world. Mankind has a strange propensity to new and untried things; and so strong a bias to shifting and changing, that scarcely any one relishes his own profession, but wishes he had been of some other. The young student of divinity hates to think of the formal, reserved deportment by which he is to separate himself from what he counts the pleasures of the world, and bid adieu to that irregularity which youth so much delights in. He longs for a commission in the army, that he may be fashionably licentious, and indulge himself, unquestioned, in the wanton sallies of a brisk, youthful appetite. In the mean time, the old soldier, harassed out with laborious campaigns abroad, and vexed with the slow returns of his half-pay at home, repines at the happy condition of the ecclesiastic, fattening in ease and plenty, and sleeping unmolested in one of the upper stalls of a cathedral. With remorse he calls to mind his former perverseness in quitting a college life, and defeating the purpose of his relations, who had purchased the next reversion of a fat benefice for him. He shakes his head, and reflects that had it not been for his folly, instead of aching limbs, and an empty purse, he might have enjoyed as much leisure and luxury as any priest in the land.

Thus, sometimes with, sometimes without reason, we are disgusted at our stations, which, however, though it may seem to be a misfortune entailed on us, still carries this advantage with it, that as we are almost sure of being disappointed by change, we are as certain likewise of gaining some experience by it, and being wiser for the future

THE MOUSE IN AN ANNUAL.

Dear Thomas! didst thou never pop
Thy head into a tinman's shop?
There, Thomas, didst thou never see,
—'Tis but by way of simile,—
A squirrel spend his little rage
In jumping round a rolling cage?
The cage, as either side turned up,
Striking a ring of bells at top?
Moved in the orb, pleased with the chimes,
The foolish creature thinks he climbs.
But here, or there, turn wood or wire,
He never gets two inches higher.
So fares it with those merry blades
Who frisk it under Pindus' shades;
In noble songs, and lofty odes,
They tread on stars and talk with gods.
Still dancing in an airy round,
Still pleased with their own verses' sound,
Brought back, how fast soe'er they go,
Always aspiring, always low.

THE ASS AND THE LION.

A CONCEITED ass had once the impudence to bray forth some contemptuous speeches against the lion. The suddenness of the insult, at first raised some emotions of wrath in his breast; but turning his head, and perceiving whence it came, they immediately subsided; and he very sedately walked on, without deigning to honour the contemptible creature, even with so much as an angry word.

THE OAK AND THE SYCAMORE.

A SYCAMORE grew beside an oak; and being not a little elevated by the first warm days in spring, began to shoot forth his leaves apace, and to despise the naked oak for insensibility and want of spirit. The oak, conscious of the superiority of his nature, made this philosophical reply: "Be not, my friend, so much delighted with the first precarious address of every fickle zephyr. Consider, the frosts may yet return; and if thou covetest an equal share with me in all the glories of the rising year, do not afford them an opportunity to nip thy beauties in their bud. For myself, I only wait to see this genial warmth a little confirmed: and whenever that is the case, I shall perhaps display a majesty that will not easily be shaken. But the tree which appears too forward to exult in the first favourable glance of spring, will ever be the readiest to droop beneath the frowns of winter."



THE WOLF AND THE LEAN DOG.

THE WOLF AND THE LEAN DOG.

A HUNGRY wolf caught a dog napping at some distance from the village; but the latter awaking, begged him to have compassion for a short time only; as he had not yet made his will, and his numerous relations would go to loggerheads about his worldly possessions, if he were to be devoured thus prematurely. "Moreover," said the dog, "it will be for your own benefit to spare me for a few days, seeing how lean I am at present. To-morrow, my master gives away his only daughter in marriage to a rich country-gentleman. The wedding feast will not fail to be protracted for a week; during which time I shall become as plump as you can desire; and will not fail to be prepared, whenever you feel inclined to call upon me."

The wolf believing the dog's assertions, let him depart. After some days, he bethought himself of ascertaining whether his property were better worth eating; but the dog was within the gates, and said to him through the palings: "My friend, I am coming out directly; if you will just wait there an instant, the porter and myself will be with you at once." By the porter, the cunning hound meant an enormous mastiff, famous for despatching wolves. Our wolf somehow mistrusted the scheme. "My respects to the porter," said he; and set off at full speed. Fortunately for his hide he was very nimble, and escaped; but never again stayed his appetite for a wedding.

THE MURRAIN.

A DIRE disease which Heaven in wrath
Devised, to work wide woe and scath,
For crimes committed here on earth,
A sickness sore, a frightful evil,
More grievous far than war or dearth,
Consigning myriads daily to the devil:
In one short word, the Plague, with dreadful ravage,
Broke out amongst the brute creation,
Assailed all animals both tame and savage,
And widely spread around its devastation,
Nor fur nor feather spared, nor males nor ladies,
But birds and beasts despatched *en masse* to Hades.
If some died not, they scarcely lived,
Nor seemed aware they had survived,
Their instincts gone, and vanished quite
Propensities and appetite.
Nor fowls nor geese the fox allure,
And Isgrim's jaws are sinecure,
All moped in melancholy mood,
Reckless alike of fight or food.
The sometime tender turtle-dove,
Indiff'rent now to life and love

(For life and love to her were one),
Her pining partner fain would shun.
The moulting mates disconsolate,
Droop, victims of the common fate.
The lion, in this sad conjuncture,
Whose conscience had received a puncture,
Resolved to hold a bed of justice,
And state to all in what his trust is.
"My fellow sufferers and friends,"
The royal speech in form begins,
"From righteous Heaven in wrath descends
This visitation for our sins.
Let all, then, secret crimes unfold,
And every tale of guilt be told.
So shall the greatest sinner seal,
Self-sacrificed, the general weal.
Nor deem it a new-fangled notion;
All hist'ry's full of such devotion.
To shorten, therefore, the debate,
Without unfruitful long digression,
That we may rightly judge our state,
Proceed we briefly to confession:
Without reservation
Or equivocation.
With openness, freedom and honest contrition,
Let us candidly look at our ghostly condition.
To begin with ourself, I must own I'm a glutton,
And have too much indulged a strong fancy for mutton
Now and then, it is true, too poor pastoral elf!
I have made a *bonne bouche* of the shepherd himself.
What harm had they done me, the poor bleating prey?
Their greatest offending was running away!
I am ready to die, and deserve it, I own;
But is death for injustice to ME due alone?
No, justice demands that the deadliest sinner,
Of such self-devotion should be the beginner.
Let's confess *seriatim*—and then, I opine,
You may hear of some greater offences than mine."
The monarch ceased, and judgment begs.
The fox was quickly on his legs,
And having caught the lion's eye,
He hastened thus to make reply:
"Ah! Sire, indeed you're much too good
To take account of such vile blood,
Too scrupulous and delicate
For one of your exalted state,

Your majesty is much too nice,
To deem sheep-slaughter such a vice!
Such slight unmeritable things!
Is mutton fare too fine for kings?
This for the brutes; then, for the man,
I think your Highness said, he ran.
Desert his flock! the precious pastor!
I am glad your majesty ran faster:
You were right to demolish so worthless a shepherd?
Would the wolf have done less? or the bear? or the leopard?
Our judgment, sire, secure abide;
'Twas justifiable homicide.
Besides the wretch, in my opinion,
Held illegitimate dominion;
O'er quadrupeds used *crooked* rule,
And was as much a knave as fool.
Let your majesty's eyes then be speedily wiped,
Are so many tears worth the while for a biped?"
The fox sat down; loud cheers resound,
And hear, hear, hear! was echoed round,
The tiger next, and savage Bruin,
Tho' guilty of less venial ruin,
The court discovered faults but few in:
Can crime exist in such high station?
All that had teeth, or tusks and spirit,
Absolved at once from all demerit,
Were guiltless found by acclamation.
At length the ass came to confession,
And thus denounced his own transgression:
"On thorny thistles starved and sad dock,
I chanced to pass the parson's paddock;
The sacred sward seemed sweet and green,
My appetite, I own, was keen,
And fair occasion urged to revel,
Or might it not have been the Devil?
Whate'er it was, I cropped the grass;
'Twas but a blade, as I'm an ass!
I own 'twas wrong, we must speak out;
I was a trespasser, no doubt!"
A general shout of indignation
Followed the donkey's declaration:
"I charge thee, ass, *de par le roi*,"
The tiger cried, (and raised his paw)
"Surrender in the name of law!"
Which he maintained, tho' no great clerk,
Was neither doubtful here, nor dark:

That sacrilege a deadly sin
Was deemed, and so had ever been,
The life of that dull long-eared loon,
Must expiate his guilt, and soon.
With one accord and general clatter,
All vote the case a hanging matter.
"What! crop the close! the parson's too!
For this can less than death be due?
When thorns and thistles grew so plenty,
Could nothing but *the glebe* content ye?
From such a sin but death can purge ye,
Death without benefit of clergy!"
Quick execution followed sentence,
And short the space for sad repentance.
The dying ass perceived too late
(Let biped asses mark his fate),
That weakness is our worst offence,
And strength the surest innocence.

THE COBBLER AND THE BANKER.

A cobbler passed his time in singing from morning till night; it was wonderful to see, wonderful to hear him; he was more contented in making shoes, than was any of the seven sages, His neighbour, on the contrary, who was rolling in wealth, sung but little, and slept less. He was a banker; when by chance he fell into a doze at day-break, the cobbler awoke him with his song. The banker complained sadly that Providence had not made sleep a saleable commodity, like edibles or drinkables. Having at length sent for the songster, he said to him: "How much a year do you earn, Master Gregory?"—"How much a year, sir?" said the merry cobbler laughing; "I never reckon in that way, living as I do from one day to another; somehow I manage to reach the end of the year; each day brings its meal."—"Well then! how much a day do you earn, my friend?"—"Sometimes more, sometimes less; but the worst of it is (and, without that our earnings would be very tolerable), a number of days occur in the year on which we are forbidden to work; and the curate, moreover, is constantly adding some new saint to the list." The banker, laughing at his simplicity, said: "In future I shall place you above want. Take this hundred crowns, preserve them carefully, and make use of them in time of need." The cobbler fancied he beheld all the wealth which the earth had produced in the past century for the use of mankind. Returning home, he buried his money and his happiness at the same time.. No more singing; he lost his voice, the moment he acquired that which is the source of so much grief. Sleep quitted his dwelling; and cares, suspicions, and false alarms took its place. All day, his eye wandered in the direction of his treasure; and at night, if some stray cat made a noise, the cat was robbing him. At length the poor man ran to the house of his rich neighbour, whom he no longer awoke: "Give me back," said he, "sleep and my voice, and take your hundred crowns."

HISTORY OF THE OLD WOLF;

IN SEVEN FABLES.

I.

The cruel wolf being in years, formed the gentle resolution of living on good terms with the shepherds. He immediately set out, and came to the swain whose flocks were nearest to his cave.

"Shepherd," said he, "you call me a blood-thirsty robber, although I am not such in reality. True I am compelled to attack your sheep when I am famished: for hunger is painful. Only save me from famine, give me enough to eat, and you shall have nothing to complain of, with respect to me; for I am really the tamest and most amiable beast when my hunger is satisfied."

"When your hunger is satisfied? I have no doubt of it," replied the shepherd, "But when is your ravenous maw ever sated? You and avarice never yet had enough. Go your way!"

II.

The rejected wolf came to a second swain.

"You must be aware," he commenced, "that I could throttle a good many sheep for you during the year. Now if you like to give me annually, six sheep, I will be satisfied. You may then sleep in safety and fearlessly dismiss your dogs."

"Six sheep?" said the shepherd. "Why that is a whole flock of itself!"—

"Well, since I know you, I'll let you off with five:" said the wolf.

"You're joking; five sheep! I scarcely sacrifice five to Pan during the year."

"Shall we say four?" pursued the wolf; the shepherd shook his head in derision.

"Three?"—"Two?—"

"Not a single one;" was at length the reply. "It would be madness, indeed, to render myself tributary to a foe, against whom I can protect myself, by keeping a sharp look out."

III.

"Misfortunes never come single;" thought the wolf, and repaired to a third shepherd.

"I am very near being decried among you shepherds," said he, "as the most cruel, unreasonable animal in existence. I will convince you, Montano, how unjustly I am dealt with. Give me annually, one sheep, and your flock shall pasture uninjured in yonder forest, which is rendered unsafe by none but me. One sheep! What a trifle! Could I behave more generously, more disinterestedly?—You laugh, shepherd? What excites your risibility?"

"Oh! nothing, nothing! But how old are you, friend?" said the shepherd.

"What does my age concern you? Old enough to carry off your most cherished lambs."

"Don't put yourself in a passion, old Grizzly! I regret that you are some years too late with your proposition. Your toothless jaws betray you. You would now pretend to play a disinterested part, in order that you may be fed more plenteously, without exposing yourself to the least danger."

IV.

The wolf became snappish; but restraining himself, went to the fourth shepherd. The faithful dog of the latter had just expired, and the wolf took advantage of this circumstance.

"Shepherd," said he, "I have fallen out with my brethren in the forest, and in such wise, that I will never be reconciled to them. You know how much you have to dread from them! If, however, you will take me into your service, in the place of your deceased dog, I will pledge myself that they shall never even cast an irreverent glance on your sheep."

"You mean then, to protect them against your brethren in the forest?" said the shepherd.

"What else should I mean? Certainly."

"That were not so bad! But if I admitted you among my flock, tell me, who would then protect my poor sheep against yourself. To take a thief into the house, as a safeguard against those without, is considered by us men—"

"I understand," said the wolf: "you are beginning to moralize. Farewell!"

V.

"Were I not so old!" snarled the wolf. "But I must bend to circumstances." So saying he came to the fifth shepherd.

"Do you know me, friend?" questioned the wolf.

"I know at least your equal;" replied the shepherd.

"My equal? I doubt that considerably. I am so remarkable a wolf, that I well merit your friendship, and that of every shepherd."

"And pray what makes you so remarkable?"

"This; if my life depended upon it, I could not possibly make up my mind to strangle and devour a living sheep. I eat nothing but dead sheep. Is not that praiseworthy? Allow me, therefore, occasionally to visit your flock, and ask whether you have not——"

"Spare your breath!" said the shepherd. "You must never eat sheep, not even dead ones, unless you wish me to become your enemy. A beast who makes no bones of devouring dead sheep, is easily taught by hunger to consider sick sheep, dead, and healthy ones, sick. Therefore don't reckon on my friendship; but be off!"

VI.

"I must now bring my forlorn hope into action, in order to carry my point!" thought the wolf, wending his way to the sixth shepherd.

"Good morning to you, friend, how do you like my skin?" asked the wolf.

"Your skin?" said the shepherd. "Let me look at it! It is in good condition; the dogs can scarcely have tackled you often."

"Well then, listen my friend; I am old, and cannot carry on my game much longer. Cherish and feed me till death, and I will make my skin over to you."

"Mighty fine!" said the shepherd. "A pretty old miser you are. No, no; your skin would in the end cost me seven times as much as its value. If, however, you really mean to make me a present, why give it me at once"—Hereupon the shepherd grasped his club, and the wolf fled.

VII.

"Oh! the heartless brutes!" shouted the wolf, flying into the most furious rage. "I will die then as I have lived, their implacable foe, rather than perish with hunger; for so they will have it!"

Rushing into the dwellings of the shepherds, he bit and lacerated their children, committing incredible mischief, before he could be slain.

Then spake the wisest of the shepherds: "We were in the wrong thus to bring the old robber to extremities, and to deprive him of all chance of improvement: even though he might have been driven to it from necessity alone!"

JUPITER AND THE SHEEP.

The sheep was forced to submit to much harm from the other animals. He therefore appeared before Jupiter, and begged him to lessen his misery.

Jove appeared willing, and said to the sheep: "I see plainly, my pious creature, that I have created you too defenceless. Now choose how I had best remedy this fault. Shall I arm your jaws with terrible fangs, and your feet with claws?"—

"O, no!" exclaimed the sheep, "I will have nothing in common with the beasts of prey."

"Or," said Jupiter, "shall I make your bite poisonous?"

"Alas!" replied the sheep: "the poisonous snakes are so sadly detested."—

"Well, what shall I do? Shall I plant horns on your forehead, and give strength to your neck?"

"Nor that, gracious father; I should then butt like the goat."

"At the same time you would be able to injure others, if I gave you the means of defending yourself."

"Should I, indeed?" sighed the sheep. "Oh! then leave me, merciful father, as I am. For the power of injuring, would, I am fearful, awake the desire of doing so; and it is better to suffer harm, than to inflict it."

Jove blessed the pious sheep, who ceased from that moment his complaints.

THE RAVEN.

The fox saw that the raven robbed the altars of the gods, and lived on the sacrifices offered to them. "I should like to know," thought he, "if the raven partakes of the sacrifice because he is a bird of prophecy; or whether he be esteemed such, because he has the boldness to share in the offerings made to the gods."

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE FLOWERS

One morning in May, a young butterfly rose
From a violet's breast where he carelessly lay,
And brushing the dew from his exquisite clothes
He opened his wings to the sun's early ray.

"Oh Ho!" he exclaimed, "'tis a frolicksome life,
For a joyous and light-hearted fellow like me.
No lecture I dread from a tutor or wife,
But live like a bachelor, airy and free."

Away then o'er many a blooming parterre,
Still smiling and flirting the butterfly flew,
He whispered his vows to the snowdrop so fair,
And sipped from the cheek of the lily the dew,

He toy'd with the cowslip—nor thought it amiss
To linger awhile in the jessamine bower;
He stole from the blushing carnation a kiss
And laughed in his sleeve at the innocent flow'r.

Thus gaily he dallied the summer day through,
As merrily onward the fleet minutes past,
From blossom to blossom the butterfly flew:
But pleasure and love must decay at the last.

For evening came down, and the vapours of night,
Fell heavy and chill on his holiday vest;
His pinions grew weary and flagging in flight,
And still he was far from his own bower of rest.

All lonely and tattered he flew to the rose.
But coldly she heard the false truant implore,
The tulip indignantly turned up her nose,
And wondered the creature dare come to *her* door.

The wall-flower and jonquil had gone to a rout,
The poppy had fallen asleep in her bed,
The starwort declared that the lights were put out,
And no one would shelter the wanderer's head.

"Alas!" sighed the butterfly, sinking to earth;
"A lesson I leave for the thoughtless and gay;
I trifled with all in the noon-tide of mirth,
Nor kept one true heart for the close of life's day."



THE SCHOOL-BOY, THE PEDANT, AND THE GARDENER.

THE SCHOOL-BOY, THE PEDANT AND THE GARDENER.

A CERTAIN school-boy rendered doubly wild and doubly roguish by his extreme youth, and by the privilege which pedants enjoy of turning their wits, was in the habit of robbing a neighbour of fruits and flowers. In the autumn, this neighbour was blessed with Pomona's choicest gifts. Each season brought its tribute; for in the spring he was overwhelmed with the gifts of Flora. One day he espied our school-boy, who, carelessly climbing a fruit-tree, spoilt all his habiliments, even to the buttons. He shook and broke the branches of the trees in such a manner, that the gardener sent to make his complaints to the school-master. The latter came, followed by a troop of children, thus filling the garden with a band of spoilers worse than the first. The pedant had graciously increased the evil by bringing with him his ill-bred rabble, in order he said, that the chastisement he intended to inflict on the offender might make a salutary impression on the minds of his scholars, which should never be effaced during their lives. Hereupon he commenced quoting Virgil and Cicero, as authorities for the importance of early impressions. His discourse lasted so long, that the little depredators had time to despoil the garden in a hundred places.

I detest pieces of eloquence misplaced, and which have no end in view; and I am acquainted with no animal in the world worse than a school-boy, unless it be a pedant. To speak the truth, I should feel very ill at ease with even the better of these two for a neighbour.

THE RIVULET AND THE WELL.

IT chanced a rivulet, flowing gay
Adown its course, one summer's day.
Address'd a well, in tone imperious;
" How is it you are always serious?
Will nothing move your gravity?
Why aim not to be known like me?
My rippling waves the poets praise,
As on my banks they tune their lays;
My murmuring flow they love to hear,
My dropping streamlets charm their ear.
Whether between yon hills I glide,
Or in the shady vales reside,
Of my meandering course they tell.
What poet ever named a well?"
" 'Tis not my sole ambition, youth,
To be by poets prais'd. In truth,
Their praise is often ill bestow'd,
Not lavish'd on the truly good.
Ask yonder swain *who* fills his pail,
If my resources ever fail;
In autumn, where's your gaiety?
My banks are full; yours empty, dry.

By words you seek to gain applause;
My services best plead my cause."
Thus said the well. September came,
The rivulet lost its very name,
The well filled Colin's buckets just the same.
'Tis thus in life. Th' illit'rate fop
His rattling tongue will never stop;
And though his wit's by fools caress'd
'Tis superficial all, at best.
But talk of science; lo! he's dumb,
His voice is parched—September's come.
Not so the skill'd, yet modest sage,
Deep read in learning's classic page;
He hears what others may disclose,
Never his knowledge vainly shews,
And little says, though always much he knows.

This moral from our tale thou reapest;
"The stillest waters are the deepest."

THE POET AND THE ROSE.

Hateful is the man who would raise his name on the ruins of another's reputation. Like him, prudes, while destroying characters, imagine that they are establishing their own; like him, writers, covetous of praise, think, by calumny, they transfer laurels from the brows of others to their own. Inspired with the same pride, *belles* and poets decry all their rivals.—Whoever would extol the features and eyes of Lesbia, must paint her sister a plain and clumsy girl; for flattery is sure to please, when accompanied with the censure of some other nymph.

In the freshness of the opening morn, a poet visited a garden covered with the dew of May. In every part of it an embalmed air breathed around him; every plant expelled the homage of its own incense. The poet gathers a rose, contemplates, admires, and thus addresses the flower, in the language which his muse inspires:—

"Rose, go and adorn the bosom of my Chloe! Too happy! could I there kindle an inextinguishable flame, and, like a Phœnix, under the eyes of Chloe, and on a bed of perfumes, burn and die!

"Know, sad flower, that you will there find roses more fragrant than yourself! I see you already bowing your head, withering with envy and despair! Doomed to the same fate we die; you with envy, I for love!"

"A truce,—a truce, with comparisons," replied a rose from a neighbouring tree. "We disturb your quiet less than that of any other. What could poets do without us? The rose flourishes in all your amorous songs; we enrich them with our colours and our odours. When you depress us to exalt your Chloe, how do you add to her charms? Must we, to flatter her, grow pale; and wither with envy, fade and die?"

THE PAINTER.

One of the most celebrated artists of Athens, who painted less for money than for fame, shewed to a connoisseur a portrait of Mars, and requested his judgment on it. The connoisseur candidly declared that the painting was too much laboured. The painter did not want reasons to justify his work. The connoisseur, on his part, urged more potent arguments; but they did not convince the artist.

A young blockhead arrives in the midst of the conversation, and fixes his eyes on the picture. "Gods!" exclaimed he, at the first glance; "what a *chef d' œuvre!*—How accurately these nails are painted!—what a beautiful helmet!—The whole is astonishingly finished!—It is Mars himself, alive!"

The painter was penetrated with shame; and, with a look of confusion, said to the connoisseur: "You are right. I own myself vanquished;" and with these words he threw the painting into the fire.

If your works do not please people of taste, it is a bad sign; but if, besides this, they please blockheads, never let them go into the world. Destroy them.

WHANG, THE MILLER.

Whang the miller, was naturally avaricious; nobody loved money better than he, or more respected those that had it. When people would talk of a rich man in company, Whang would say, "I know him very well; he and I have been very long acquainted, he and I are intimate." But if ever a poor man were mentioned, he had not the least knowledge of him: he might be very well, for aught he knew, but he was not fond of making many acquaintances, and loved to choose his company. Whang, however, with all his eagerness for riches, was poor. He had nothing but the profits of his mill to support him; but though these were small, they were certain: while it stood and went, he was sure of eating; and his frugality was such, that he every day laid some money by, which he could at intervals count and contemplate with much satisfaction. Yet still his acquisitions were not equal to his desires; he only found himself above want, whereas he desired to be possessed of affluence. One day, as he was indulging these wishes, he was informed that a neighbour of his had found a pan of money under ground, having dreamed of it three nights running before. These tidings were daggers to the heart of poor Whang. "Here am I," said he, "toiling and moiling from morning to night, for a few paltry farthings, while neighbour Thanks only goes quietly to bed, and dreams himself into thousands before morning. O that I could dream like him! With what pleasure would I dig round the pan! how slily would I carry it home! not even my wife should see me: and then, O the pleasure of thrusting one's hand into a heap of gold up to the elbow!" Such reflections only served to make the miller unhappy: he discontinued his former assiduity; he was quite disgusted with small gains, and his customers began to forsake him. Every day he repeated his wish, and every night laid himself down in order to dream. Fortune, that was for a long time unkind, at last, however, seemed to smile upon his distress, and indulged him with the wished-for vision. He dreamed, that under a part of the foundation of his mill, there was concealed

a monstrous pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground and covered with a large flat stone. He concealed his good luck from every person, as is usual in money dreams, in order to have the vision repeated the two succeeding nights, by which he should be certain of its truth. His wishes in this also were answered; he still dreamed of the same pan of money, in the very same place. Now, therefore, it was past a doubt; so getting up early the third morning, he repaired alone with a mattock in his hand to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall to which the vision directed. The first omen of success that he met with, was a broken ring; digging still deeper, he turned up a house-tile, quite new and entire. At last, after much digging, he came to a broad, flat stone, but so large, that it was beyond man's strength to remove it. "There," cried he in raptures, to himself, "there it is; under this stone there is room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed. I must e'en go home to my wife, and tell her the whole affair, and get her to assist me in turning it up." Away, therefore he goes, and acquaints his wife with every circumstance of their good fortune. Her raptures on this occasion may easily be imagined; she flew round his neck, and embraced him in an agony of joy; but these transports did not allay their eagerness to know the exact sum; returning, therefore, to the place where Whang had been digging, there they found—not indeed the expected treasure; but the mill, their only support, undermined and fallen!

THE IZARN

Some country girls belonging to a village of the Spanish Cerdaigne, situated upon the highest of the Pyrenean mountains, saw as they were gathering wild spinach, a flock of izarns, a species of chamois goats, followed by their kids. They tried to catch one of the latter, and succeeded. The rest of the flock had fled; but, scarcely had the poor captive bleated, when an izarn was seen listening at a distance. This was the dam, whom the girl that was possessed of the kid, tried by its means to draw nearer, and to catch. Climbing a craggy rock with her prey, she shews it to the dam, who at the cries of the young izarn begins to approach, trembling; and, after retiring and returning several times, with repeated bleatings on both sides, at last yields to Nature, comes to her kid and suffers herself, without resistance, to be tied by the female peasant. Forgetting her savageness, she allowed herself to be conducted wherever the villager pleased. But where is the wonder? The izarn was a mother,—not a mere nurse.

THE MISER.

"Oh! miserable wretch that I am!" said a miser to his neighbour. "Some heartless thief has stolen from me, last night, the treasure which I had buried in my garden, and deposited a cursed stone in its place."

"You would have made no use of your gold," replied his neighbour. "Just fancy that the stone is the treasure; and you will be no poorer."

"Even though I were not any poorer," returned the miser, "is not another just so much richer? Another so much richer! O! I shall go mad."

THE WALLET.

Jove once assembling all his creatures,
  Proclaimed, whoe'er disliked his lot,
As far as outward form and features,
  Might have them mended on the spot.

Amongst the rest he saw the ape,
  Thought him fit subject for beginning:
But Jacko faultless found his shape,
  And saw the graces in his grinning.

Said Jack: "You might have pitched a worse on,
  Sire, in the crowd that's here attending!
There's brother Bruin's half-licked person
  May need, I think, some little mending."

The bear, not wishing to complain,
  Said: "That pert Jackanapes must dote.
How many beasts desire in vain,
  The comforts of this shaggy coat.

"Yon elephant, our height o'ertopping,
  In clumsy bulk perhaps is stronger;
But sure his ears require some cropping,
  Should not his tail be somewhat longer?"

The elephant these changes scouted;
  The same vain notions e'en prevail
In his wise head; he rather doubted
  If not too large was fat dame whale.

Contented was my lady whale;
  While mistress ant believed miss mite
Was made on much too small a scale;
  She thought her own dimensions right.

Not one there was in all the crowd
  Wished to be larger, smaller, straighter:
The ugliest monster there was proud
  Of the fair gifts bestowed by Nature.

Above the rest conspicuous, Man
  Appeared, than other creatures vainer.
Great Jove contrived a simple plan
  To make this obvious truth the plainer.

At his command men wallets bore :
For holding faults was made the sack.
One end, as usual hung before,
The other close behind his back.

Each to his own dear failings blind,
To find another's error labours ;
Packs up his own faults snug behind,
And crams the front pouch with his neighbours' !

THE LOST CAMEL.

A DERVISE was journeying alone in the desert, when two merchants suddenly met him. "You have lost a camel," said he to the merchants. "Indeed we have," they replied. "Was he not blind in his right eye, and lame in his left leg?" said the dervise. "He was," replied the merchants. "Had he lost a front tooth?" said the dervise. "He had," rejoined the merchants. "And was he not loaded with honey on one side, and wheat on the other?"—"Most certainly he was," they replied; "and as you have seen him so lately, and marked him so particularly, you can, in all probability, conduct us to him."—"My friends," said the dervise, "I have never seen your camel, nor ever heard of him but from yourselves."—"A pretty story, truly!" said the merchants; "but where are the jewels which formed part of his cargo?"—"I have neither seen your camel nor your jewels," repeated the dervise. On this, they seized his person, and forthwith hurried him before the cadi, where, on the strictest search, nothing could be found upon him, nor could any evidence whatever be adduced to convict him, either of falsehood or of theft. They were then about to proceed against him as a sorcerer, when the dervise, with great calmness, thus addressed the court : "I have been much amused with your surprise, and own, that there has been some ground for your suspicions; but I have lived long, and alone; and I can find ample scope for observation, even in a desert. I knew that I had crossed the track of a camel that had strayed from its owner, because I saw no mark of any human footsteps on the same route; I knew that the animal was blind of one eye, because it had cropped the herbage only on one side of the path: and I perceived that it was lame of one leg from the faint impression that particular foot had produced upon the sand; I concluded that the animal had lost one tooth, because wherever it had grazed, a small tuft of herbage was left uninjured, in the centre of its bite. As to that which formed the burden of the beast, the busy ants informed me that it was corn on the one side, and the clustering flies, that it was honey on the other."

THE FOX AND THE MASK.

IN ancient times, a fox found the mask of a player (formed so as to cover the whole head), with a large distorted mouth. "What a strange looking head," exclaimed the observing fox. "No brains, and the mouth open! Surely this must be the head of a chatter-box!"

Everlasting talkers! perverters of our most innocent thoughts! the fox knew ye.

THE SPECTACLES.

A CERTAIN artist, I forget his name,
Had got for making spectacles a fame,
Or, 'helps to read,'—as, when they first were sold,
Was writ upon his glaring sign in gold;
And for all uses to be had from glass
His were allowed by readers to surpass.
There came a man into his shop one day,
"Are you the spectacle contriver, pray?"—
"Yes, Sir," said he; "I can in that affair
Contrive to please you, if you want a pair."—
"Can you? Pray do, then." So at first he chose
To place a youngish pair upon his nose;
And book produced to see how they would fit;
Asked how he liked them. "Like them! not a bit."
"There, Sir, I fancy, if you please to try,
These in my hand will better suit your eye."
"No, but they don't."—"Well, come, Sir, if you please,
Here is another sort—we'll e'en try these;
Still somewhat more they magnify the letter:
Now, Sir,"—"Why now I'm not a bit the better."—
"No! here, take these, which magnify still more;
How do they fit?"—"Like all the rest before."
In short, they tried a whole assortment through,
But all in vain, for none of them would do.
The operator, much surprised to find
So odd a case, thought—sure the man is blind.
"What sort of eyes can you have got?" said he.
"Why very good ones, friend, as you may see."
"Yes, I perceive the clearness of the ball;
Pray let me ask you, can you read at all?"—
"No, surely not, Sir: if I could what need
Of paying you for any 'help to read?'"
And so he left the maker in a heat,
Resolved to post him for an arrant cheat.

THE MOUSE

A PHILOSOPHICAL mouse spoke loudly in praise of Nature's goodness for having made the mice such particular objects of her regard and preservation. "For," said she, "one half of us is provided by her with wings: so that if all here below were extirpated by Grimalkin, she could easily restore our extinguished race by means of the bats."

The good little mouse knew not that there were also flying cats. And even thus does our pride chiefly rest on ignorance.

TIME AND CUPID.

His life in travelling always spent,
Old Time, a far renowned wight,
To a wide river's margin went,
And called for aid with all his might:
"Will none have pity on my years,
I that preside in ev'ry clime?
Oh, my good friends and passengers
Lend, lend a hand to pass old Time!"

Full many a young and sprightly lass,
Upon the adverse bank appeared,
Who eager sought old Time to pass,
On a small bark, by Cupid steer'd:
But one, the wisest, so I ween,
Repeated oft this moral rhyme;
'Ah! many a one has shipwrecked been,
Thoughtless and gay, in passing Time!"

Blithe Cupid soon the bark unmoored,
And spread the lightly-waving sail;
He took old Father Time on board,
And gave his canvas to the gale.
Then joyous as he rode along,
He oft exclaimed: "Observe, my lasses;
Attend the burden of my song,
How sprightly Time with Cupid passes!"

At length the urchin weary grew,
For soon or late 'tis still his case;
He dropt the oar and rudder too;
Time steer'd the vessel in his place.
Triumphant now the veteran cries,
"'Tis now my turn you find young lasses,
What the old proverb says, is wise:
'That Love with Time as lightly passes.'"

THE GOATS.

The most influential members of the community of goats, preferred a petition to Jupiter, praying to be furnished with horns; for formerly they had none.

"Consider well what you ask," said Jove. "To the gift of horns, another is inevitably joined, which you may not find agreeable."

But the goats adhering to their petition, their desire was acceded to.

And the goats received horns—and a beard! for at first they had no beards also.

They were more grieved at this ugly appendage, than rejoiced with the other.



THE FOX AND THE CAT.

THE FOX AND THE CAT.

As the fox and the cat were talking politics together in the middle of the forest, Renard said, let things turn out ever so bad, he did not care, for he had a thousand tricks for them yet, before they should hurt him. "But pray, Mr. Puss," said he, "suppose there should be an invasion, what course do you desire to take?"—"Nay," replied the cat, "I have but one shift for it, and if that won't do, I am undone."—"I am sorry for you," replied Renard, "with all my heart, and would gladly furnish you with one or two of mine; but, indeed, neighbour, as times go, it is not good to trust; we must even be every one for himself, as the saying is, and so your humble servant." These words were scarcely out of his mouth, when they were alarmed with a pack of hounds that came upon them in full cry. The cat, by the help of his single shift, ran up a tree, and sat securely among the top branches; from whence he beheld Renard, who had not been able to get out of sight, overtaken with his thousand tricks, and torn in as many pieces by the dogs that had surrounded him.

A man that sets up to be wiser than his neighbours, is generally a silly fellow at bottom. One good, discreet expedient, made use of upon emergency, will do a man more real service, and make others think better of him, than to have passed all along for a shrewd crafty knave, and bubbled at last. When any one has been such a coxcomb as to insult his acquaintance by pretending to more policy and stratagem than the rest of mankind, they are apt to wish for some difficulty for him to shew his skill in: where, if he should miscarry (as ten to one but he does), his misfortune, instead of pity, is sure to be attended with laughter.

THE COCK AND THE RAVEN.

A RAVEN rather thievishly inclined,
Went hopping here and there to pilfer
Such little god-sends, both of gold and silver,
As he could find.
With seals, and watch-chains, trinkets, rings,
And fifty other pretty little things.
At last a grave old cock, who saw,
At sundry times,
Our black transgressor of the law,
Commit these crimes;
One day address'd him with a "Pr'ythee,
Why dost thou fetch these gew-gaws with thee?
What use can *these* be to thee?"—"None,"
Quoth the old robber, in a croaking tone,
"But then I take them
You see, to make them
My own."

THE HERMIT.

A CERTAIN hermit had hollowed his cave near the summit of a lofty mountain, from whence he had an opportunity of surveying a large extent both of sea and land. He sat one evening, contemplating with pleasure the various objects that lay before him. The woods were drest in the brightest verdure, the thickets adorned with the gayest blossoms. The birds carolled beneath the branches; the lambs frolicked around the meads; the peasant whistled beside his team; and ships driven by gentle gales, were returning safely into their proper harborus. In short, the arrival of spring had doubly enlivened the whole scene before his eye, and every object yielded a display of either beauty or happiness. On a sudden arose a violent storm. The winds mustered all their fury, and whole forests of oak lay scattered on the ground. Darkness instantly succeeded; hail-stones and rain were poured forth in torrents, and lightning and thunder added to the horror of the gloom. And now the sea, piled up in mountains, bore aloft the largest vessels, while the horrid uproar of its waves drowned the shrieks of the wretched mariners. When the whole tempest had exhausted its fury, it was instantly followed by the shock of an earthquake. The poor inhabitants of a neighbouring village flocked in crowds to our hermit's cave, religiously hoping, that his well-known sanctity would protect them in their distress. They were, however, not a little surprised at the profound tranquillity which appeared in his countenance. "My friends," said he, "be not dismayed. Terrible to me as well as to you would have been the war of elements we have just beheld, but that I have meditated with so much attention on the various works of Providence, as to be persuaded that his goodness is equal to his power."

THE FURIES.

"MY Furies are getting old and dull," said Pluto to the messenger of the Gods. "Go, therefore, Mercury, and seek out in the upper world three females well qualified for the office." Mercury departed.

Shortly after, Juno said to her attendant: "Believest thou, Iris, thou could'st find among mortals three perfectly strict, modest women? But perfectly strict! Do you understand me? I would thus shame Cytherea, who boasts of having overcome the chaste sentiments of the whole female sex. Go, and see where they are located." Iris took her departure.

In what corner of the earth did not the good Iris seek? But all in vain. She returned quite alone, when Juno cried with astonishment: "Is it possible? Oh chastity! oh virtue!"

"Goddess," said Iris, "I could indeed have brought you three maidens, who were all perfectly strict and chaste; who had all three never bestowed a look upon man; who had all three stifled every spark of love in their bosoms: but unhappily I came too late."

"Too late," said Juno. "How so?"

"Mercury had just fetched them away for Pluto."

"For Pluto? And how will he make use of these virtuous ones?"

"As the Furies."

SIMONIDES SAVED BY THE GODS.

Three sorts of beings may be found,
Whose worthy praise we poets cannot sing
Or say too loudly.
French moralists this courtly rule propound:
These are, the Gods, your Mistress, and the King.
Sweet praise has gain'd, grave authors tell.
The yielding smiles of many a belle,
Who once look'd proudly.
Kings hate not praise:—how Gods reward a poet—
This fable read, and you will quickly know it.

Simonides, the bard of Cos,
Engaged to sing a conquering wrestler's fame.
The promised poem
He tried to weave, but soon was at a loss,
Soon to the end of his dry theme he came.
Of a rich cit his hero was the son,
Plebeian ancestors no wreaths had won;—
He could not shew 'em.
In short, this wight, without wit, rank, or birth,
Could wrestle, but do nothing else on earth.

The bard embarrass'd called the Gods in aid,
And then in lofty strains he Pollux sung,
And also Castor:
Their wrestling feats the poet there displayed,
And told how shone the twins from Leda sprung.
That for his fist of weighty force,
This of the swift and untam'd horse
The mighty master.
While thus Simonides their praise rehearses,
He fills the best part of the wrestler's verses.

The usual fee was at a talent rated:
But when the employer this encomium read,
He rather drily
Observ'd one half the price must be abated;
"One third indeed is all *my* share," he said,
"Castor perhaps or Pollux may,
If they think fit *their* portion pay,
They're praised so highly.
Ask for the balance from these regions upper.—
But Sim, I've friends to night—pray come to supper.'

Simonides with much good humour
Accepts this blunt and sudden invitation,
And there attended:

Hoping indeed, if nothing he could do more,
To gain some praise himself on this occasion.
He joined the party, ate and quaff'd,
Heard compliments, at stories laughed
With bon-mots blended.
When from the company was call'd the bard;
Two strangers at the gate were knocking hard.

He quits in haste:—what should these be
Who at the wrestler's door so loudly thundered?—
They were indeed
The twins divine who graced his eulogy!
The bard with wide stretched eyes beheld and wonder'd.
They thank'd him for his tuneful lyric
With all its welcome panegyric—
"Now take your meed:
We come to give you timely information;
This house now nods from top to its foundation."

They vanished:—down with dreadful clatter
Fell ev'ry chimney, pillar, wall, and ceiling,
Which seem'd so tight all!
Broken was there full many a jug and platter:
When good Simonides devoutly kneeling,
Thank'd his kind patrons for the warning;
But the poor quibbler of the morning,
O just requital!
Felt a huge beam his two shin bones assaulting,
Whilst the bruised guests were glad to creep home halting.

This wonder ran thro' all the land:
Of praise the salary was now made double
To the Gods' minion.
For all the dead and living verse was plann'd,
And well they paid the poet for his trouble.
Then praised be Gods, and praised be Kings—
For both can give away good things:—
In my opinion,
Bards are their warmest friends:— and so they class us.—
Olympus always must protect Parnassus.

THE THORN.

"Just inform me," said the willow to the thorn, "why you are so anxious to seize the clothes of mankind as they pass by you? Of what use can they be to you?"

"None," said the thorn. "Neither do I wish to take them from him; I only want to tear them."

THE RABBITS.

Hard by the margin of a wood,
By several savage hounds pursued,
A rabbit, sinking with affright,
Strove to elude their scent and sight.
Away he fled in full career;
When, starting from a thicket near,
His comrade cried across the mead:
"Whence all this bustle, all this speed?"—
"Oh fatal speed, and source of pain,
Two greyhounds chased me o'er the plain;
And down yon hill without remorse,
Behold they wind their rapid course!"—
"I view them, friend, but by their yell
They beagles are, I know them well."—
"Beagles or greyhounds, this I know,
They will effect my overthrow:—
Mark how they bound with luckless strength,
I'm sure they're greyhounds by their length."—
"Poh! poh! they beagles are, I swear,
Their very voices so declare!"
"No, no—they're greyhounds."—"You mistake,
They beagles are—I know their make!"
At length, so warm the matter rose,
From words they almost came to blows;
When straight the dogs, then running mute,
Killed both, and ended the dispute.

THE SHEEP.

As Jupiter was celebrating his marriage festival, and all the animals had made offerings to him, Juno missed the sheep.

"Where is the sheep?" enquired the goddess. "Why delays the pious sheep to bring us its humble offering?"

The dog stepped forward and said: "Do not be angry, goddess! This morning have I seen the sheep. It seemed very sorrowful, and wept bitterly."

"What may have caused its grief?" asked the goddess already moved with compassion.

"'Wretched creature that I am!' it said: 'I have now neither milk nor wool; what shall I offer the great Jupiter? Must I alone appear empty-handed before him? Rather will I go to the shepherd, and beg him to sacrifice me on Jove's altar!'"

At this moment, the shepherd's prayer accompanying the scent from the sacrifice of the devoted sheep, arose through the clouds. Could tears have bedewed celestial eyes, Juno would have wept for the first time.

THE MAN AND THE FLEA.

Whether in earth, in air, or main,
Sure every thing alive is vain!
Does not the hawk all fowls survey
As destined only for his prey?
And do not tyrants, prouder things,
Think men were born for slaves to kings?
When the crab views the pearly strands,
Or Tagus, bright with golden sands;
Or crawls beside the coral grove,
And hears the ocean roll above:
"Nature is too profuse," says he,
"Who gave all these to pleasure me!"
When bord'ring pinks and roses bloom,
And every garden breathes perfume;
When peaches glow with sunny dyes,
Like Laura's cheeks when blushes rise;
When with huge figs the branches bend,
When clusters from the vine depend;
The snail looks round on flower and tree,
And cries: "All these were made for me!"
"What dignity's in human nature!"
Says Man, the most conceited creature,
As from a cliff he cast his eyes,
And viewed the sea and arched skies:
The sun was sunk beneath the main;
The moon, and all the starry train,
Hung the vast vault of Heaven. The man,
His contemplation thus began:
"When I behold this glorious show,
And the wide wat'ry world below,
The scaly people of the main,
The beasts that range the wood or plain,
The winged inhabitants of air,
The day, the night, the various year,
And know all these by Heaven designed
As gifts to pleasure human-kind:
I cannot raise my worth too high;
Of what vast consequence am I!"
"Not of th' importance you suppose,"
Replies a flea upon his nose:
"Be humble, learn thyself to scan;
Know, pride was never made for Man.
'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.
What, Heaven and earth for thee designed!
For thee! made only for our need,
That more important fleas might feed."

THE LION AND THE ASS HUNTING.

A LION once, who lov'd the chase,
Pursued his sport with so much zeal,
Round his domain he clear'd the place:
The royal game such panic feel,
At the least noise, bucks, stags, and boars would fly,
Nor staid at all to know the reason why

Now strength and speed no more avail:
This adverse run of luck to stem,
Since all straight-forward methods fail,
He has recourse to stratagem.
Low means sometimes the strongest may surpass,
The monarch gives his orders to an ass.

"Midst a thick bush, go hide thee, Donkey,
In yon far corner of the wood;
There bray thy best in sharp and strong key!"
Jack went and bray'd as loud as e'er he could.
The beasts all flying from the fancied danger,
Fell truly victims to the royal ranger.

Finished the chase, the chanter came,
And how his notes had sped enquir'd;
The lion now exhibiting the game,
His vocal efforts very much admir'd.
"Had I not known your character and station,"
Said he, "myself had felt some trepidation."

Poor silly Jack grew vain and saucy,
Having once put the beasts to flight;
But of their fears they soon the cause see,
For braggart Jack still brays from morn till night.
Of every beast he grows the jest and scoff,
And soon his angry patron turns him off.

Such odd events sometimes 'mongst men
Have happened formerly I guess;
And may perhaps betide again;
The dullest ass by chance may gain success.

THE KING AND THE TWO SHEPHERDS.

A CERTAIN monarch was one day regretting the misfortune of being king: "What a wearisome occupation!" said he, "is there any mortal on the earth more annoyed than I am? I wish to live in peace, and am forced to go to war; I cherish my subjects and impose few taxes on them; I am a lover of truth, and

yet am incessantly deceived; my people is oppressed with ills, and I am consumed with grief. I seek advice every where, use all means; but my trouble is only thrown away; the more I exert myself, the less do I succeed."

At this moment a flock of lean sheep caught his eye in the plain. They were almost without fleece; ewes without lambs, lambs without their mothers; dispersed, bleating, scattered, and the powerless rams wandering among the bushes. Their pastor Lubin was running here and there, now after this sheep, which was at the entrance of the forest, now after yonder, which was lagging behind, then after his pet lambs. While he is in one quarter, a wolf seizes one of the flock and makes off with it. Away posts the shepherd, and another wolf carries off the lamb he has just quitted. Lubin stops quite out of breath, and tears his hair, not knowing which way to run, and franticly beating his breast, calls on death for relief.

"Here is a faithful representation of me," cried the monarch; "these poor shepherds endure a slavery no milder than we kings; constantly surrounded by danger. That's some consolation."

As he uttered these words, he perceived in a meadow another flock of sheep, all fat and scarcely able to walk from the weight of their fleece; the rams strutted proudly about, and the ewes with their dugs full, made the bounding lambs hasten to share the sweet nourishment. Their shepherd luxuriously stretched beneath a hedge was composing verses in praise of his mistress, sweetly singing them to the listening echoes; and then repeating the plaintive air on his flute.

The king was astonished, and said: "This beautiful flock will soon be destroyed; the wolves will scarcely be afraid of amorous swains, singing to their shepherdesses; a flute is a sorry weapon wherewith to repel them. Oh! how I should laugh!—" At that moment as if to please him, a wolf came in sight; but scarcely had he appeared, when a watchful dog sprung upon and throttled him Two sheep, frightened at the noise of the combat, quitted the flock and ran about the plain. Another dog sets off, brings them back, and order is restored in an instant. The shepherd views all, seated on the turf without ceasing to play.

Hereupon the king said to him, half angrily: "How do you manage? The woods are filled with wolves; your sheep, fat and beautiful, are almost countless: and with the utmost tranquillity you take care of the whole flock yourself!"

"Sire," replied the shepherd, "the thing is perfectly easy, my whole secret consists in making choice of good dogs."

THE MAN AND THE DOG.

A MAN being bit by a dog, flew into a passion, and slew the cur. The wound seemed dangerous, and it was thought advisable to consult a physician.

"I know of no better means," said the doctor, "than dipping a piece of bread in the blood from the wound, and giving it the dog to eat. If this sympathetic cure fail, why then—" Here he shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh! wretched hastiness!" exclaimed the man: "the means proposed can not now be tried, for I have killed the dog."



THE TWO RATS, THE FOX, AND THE EGG.

THE TWO RATS, THE FOX AND THE EGG.

Two rats foraging for provision, found an egg, sufficiently large to dine these small gentry: it was not absolutely necessary for them to find an ox. Their appetites being good, each hastened to devour his share of the prize, when a competitor appeared; this was no other than greedy Renard; a most unfortunate rencounter for our two friends, for how were they to save the egg? Should they cover it carefully over, carry it together on their fore-paws, roll, or drag it along? either way would be almost impossible, and equally hazardous. Necessity ingeniously furnished them with an invention. Perceiving that they should have time to reach their dwelling, the glutton being nearly a quarter of a mile off, one threw himself on his back, took the egg between his paws, when, despite a few bruises, through occasionally stumbling, the other dragged him along by the tail.

Who would affirm after this, that brutes are destitute of reason?

THE JUGGLERS.

A JUGGLER long through all the town
Had raised his fortune and renown;
You'd think (so far his art transcends)
The devil at his finger ends.
Vice heard his fame, she read his bill;
Convinced of his inferior skill,
She sought his booth, and from the crowd
Defied the man of art aloud:
"Is this then he so famed for sleight?
Can this slow bungler cheat your sight?
Dares he with me dispute the prize?
I leave it to impartial eyes."
Provoked, the juggler cried: "'Tis done;
In science I submit to none."
Thus said, the cups and balls he played;
By turns this here, that there conveyed,
The cards, obedient to his words,
Are by a fillip turned to birds.
His little boxes change the grain:
Trick after trick deludes the train.
He shakes his bag, he shews all fair;
His fingers spread, and nothing there;
Then bids it rain with showers of gold:
And now his iv'ry eggs are told;
But when from thence the hen he draws,
Amazed spectators hum applause.
Vice now stept forth, and took the place,
With all the forms of his grimace.

"This magic looking-glass," she cries,
"(There, hand it round,) will charm your eyes."
Each eager eye the sight desired,
And every man himself admired.
Next, to a senator addressing:
"See this bank-note; observe the blessing,
Breathe on the bill. Heigh, pass! 'tis gone."
Upon his lips a padlock shone.
A second puff the magic broke;
The padlock vanished, and he spoke.
Twelve bottles ranged upon the board,
All full, with heady liquor stored,
By clean conveyance disappear,
And now, two bloody swords are there.
A purse she to a thief exposed;
At once his ready fingers closed.
He opes his fist, the treasure's fled:
He sees a halter in its stead.
She bids ambition hold a wand;
He grasps a hatchet in his hand.
A box of charity she shews:
"Blow here;" and a churchwarden blows.
'Tis vanished with conveyance neat,
And on the table smokes a treat.
She shakes the dice, the board she knocks,
And from all pockets fills her box.
She next a meagre rake addressed:
"This picture see; her shape, her breast!
What youth, and what inviting eyes!
Hold her, and have her." With surprise
His hand exposed a box of pills,
And a loud laugh proclaimed his ills.
A counter in a miser's hand,
Grew twenty guineas at command.
She bids his heir the sum retain,
And 'tis a counter now again.
A guinea with her touch you see
Take every shape but charity,
And not one thing you saw, or drew,
But changed from what was first in view.
The juggler now, in grief of heart,
With this submission owned her art:
"Can I such matchless sleight withstand!
How practice hath improved your hand!
But now and then, I cheat the throng;
You every day, and all day long."

THE PASHA AND THE MERCHANT.

A GREEK merchant traded largely in a Mussulman country. A Pasha protected him, for which the Greek paid him a proportionate amount; protection for a wealthy man is expensive. This cost so much, that our Greek complained universally. Three other Turks, of a less elevated rank, came to offer him their united support, and would be contented with considerably less than he had hitherto paid to one alone. The Greek eagerly listened, and entered into an agreement with them. The Pasha was soon informed of it, and counselled to be even with the interlopers by sending them with a message to the tomb of the Prophet. The three allies, however, knowing that he would have people on the road ready to avenge him, sent the merchant a poison sufficiently powerful to put the Pasha in a fair way of offering his protection to the traders of the other world.

This reaching the Turk's ear, he went straightway to the house of the merchant, and took a seat at his table. In his whole discourse and manner, no one would have imagined that he mistrusted aught.

"Friend," said he, "I am aware that you are about to leave my protection; I am even warned of the consequences: but I will place faith in you, for you have not the appearance of a poisoner, and will therefore drop the subject. With respect to these gentry who offer you their support, listen to me; without wearying you with a host of *pros* and *cons*, I will merely relate the following:

"'There was formerly a shepherd who lived peaceably with his dog and his flock. Some one asked him what he wanted with so enormous a mastiff which devoured a whole loaf at every meal. A fine animal like that should be given to the squires; while he, the shepherd, for economy's sake, could have two or three terriers, which, costing less, would watch the flock better than this one great beast. He devoured as much as three; but they forgot that he had also triple jaws when the wolves offered battle. The shepherd got rid of him; and took three smaller dogs, which cost him less to keep, but avoided the conflict. The flock suffered for it.'—

"And so will you suffer for your choice of this rabble. If you would be safe, you will return to me." The merchant took his advice.

This would shew that in the long run, it is better to trust to the good faith of some powerful monarch, than to rely for protection on numerous petty rulers.

THE FOX AND THE TIGER.

"WOULD that I possessed thy speed and strength!" said a fox to a tiger.

"Is there nothing else about me which would suit you?" enquired the latter.

"Not that I perceive."

"Not even my beautiful skin?" said the tiger. "Its colours are as manifold as your imagination, and the outside would thus be well matched with the interior."

"For that precise reason would I decline it," replied the fox. "I must not appear that which I am. But I would to Heaven I could change my hair for plumes!"

THE TOAD AND THE GOLD-FISH.

As a gold-fish, newly brought from the warm regions of the east, displayed his beauties in the sun, a toad, who had long eyed him with no small degree of envy, broke out into this exclamation: "How partial and fantastic is the favour of mankind! regardless of every excellence that is obvious and familiar, and only struck with what is imported from a distant climate, at a large expence! What a pompous bason is here constructed, and what extreme fondness is here shewn for this insignificant stranger, while a quadruped of my importance is neglected, shunned, and even persecuted. Surely were I to appear in China, I should receive the same, or perhaps greater honours than are lavished here upon this tinsel favourite." The gold-fish, conscious of his real beauty, and somewhat angry to be thus insulted by so very unsightly and deformed a creature, made this rational reply: "It must be confessed that the opinions of men are sometimes guided by the caprice you mention. Yet as for me and the rest of my tribe, it is well known that if we are admired in England, we are not less admired at home, being there esteemed by the greatest mandarins, fed by stated officers, and lodged in basons as supurb as any your nation has to boast. Perhaps then, notwithstanding your sage remark, there are some virtues and qualities that please or disgust almost universally; and, as innocence joined to beauty seldom fails to procure esteem, so malice added to deformity will cause as general a detestation."

THE COW-HERD AND THE GAMEKEEPER.

Colin was one day minding his father's cows, and, not being in love, felt quite dull in his solitude. The gamekeeper emerging from the forest, addressed him, saying: "Ever since day-break have I been chasing an old buck, which has twice escaped me, and has put me quite out of breath. He just passed yonder."

"If you are tired," said Colin, "you had better rest yourself, take care of my cows, and I will pursue your game. I'll answer for the buck."

"By Jove! an excellent idea! Here, take my gun and dog, and make sure of him." Colin willingly arms himself, calls Sultan, who, though with regret, sets off with him for the forest. The dog beats the bushes, sniffs here and there, and suddenly makes a dead halt. He has espied the buck. The impatient Colin fires immediately; misses the beast and wounds poor Sultan, who runs back howling to the meadow followed by the cow-herd. He finds the gamekeeper snoring. But what has become of the cows? they are all stolen. The wretched Colin, tearing his hair, runs distractedly over hill and dale, but finds nothing. Covered with shame, he returns at night to his father, without the cows, and tremblingly relates the whole affair. The latter catching up a stout cudgel, teaches his son to be less aspiring; saying to him: "Every one to his trade; if you had adhered to yours, I should now have had my cows, and you would be minus a sound thrashing.

THE BOY AND THE RAINBOW.

Declare, ye sages, if ye find
'Mongst animals of ev'ry kind,
Of each condition, sort, and size,
From whales and elephants to flies,
A creature that mistakes his plan,
And errs so constantly as man.
Each kind pursues his proper good,
And seeks for pleasure, rest, and food,
As nature points, and never errs
In what it chooses and prefers :
Man only blunders, though possest
Of talents far above the rest.
Descend to instances, and try ;
An ox will scarce attempt to fly,
Or leave his pasture in the wood,
With fishes to explore the flood.
Man only acts, of ev'ry creature,
In opposition to his nature.
The happiness of human-kind
Consists in rectitude of mind ;
A will subdued to reason's sway,
And passions practis'd to obey ;
An open and a gen'rous heart,
Refined from selfishness and art ;
Patience, which mocks at Fortune's pow'r,
And wisdom never sad nor sour.
In these consist our proper bliss,
Else Plato reasons much amiss :
But foolish mortals still pursue
False happiness in place of true.
Ambition serves us for a guide,
Or lust, or avarice, or pride ;
While Reason no assent can gain,
And Revelation warns in vain.
Hence through our lives, in ev'ry stage,
From infancy itself to age,
A happiness we toil to find,
Which still avoids us like the wind ;
Ev'n when we think the prize our own,
At once 'tis vanish'd, lost and gone.
You'll ask me why I thus rehearse
All Epictetus in my verse ?
And if I fondly hope to please
With dry reflections, such as these,
So trite, so hacknied and so stale ?
I'll take the hint, and tell a tale.

One evening as a simple swain
His flock attended on the plain,
The shining bow he chanc'd to spy,
Which warns us when a show'r is nigh;
With brightest rays it seem'd to glow;
Its distance, eighty yards or so.
This bumpkin had, it seems, been told
The story of the cup of gold,
Which fame reports is to be found
Just where the rainbow meets the ground,
He therefore felt a sudden itch
To seize the goblet and be rich;
Hoping, yet hopes are oft but vain,
No more to toil thro' wind and rain,
But sit indulging by the fire,
'Midst ease and plenty like a squire.
He marked the very spot of land
On which the rainbow seemed to stand,
And, stepping forward at his leisure,
Expected to have found the treasure.
But as he moved, the coloured ray
Still chang'd its place and slipt away,
As seeming his approach to shun,
From walking he began to run;
But all in vain, it still withdrew
As nimbly as he could pursue.
At last, thro' many a bog and lake,
Rough, craggy road, and thorny brake,
It led the easy fool till night
Approached, then vanish'd from his sight,
And left him to compute his gains,
With nought but labour for his pains.

THE GRAPES.

A GREAT poet is more injured by the screaming admiration of his petty imitators, than by the envious contempt of his critics.

"They are most undoubtedly sour!" said the fox speaking of the grapes which he had vainly endeavoured to reach. A sparrow, who overheard him, said, "What! can these grapes be sour? They have anything but the appearance of being so!" Flying to taste them, he found they were uncommonly sweet, and invited a hundred of his sweet-toothed brothers to share the spoil. "Taste them!" he shouted: "taste them! The fox calls these exquisite grapes sour."

All followed his advice, and in a few seconds, they had handled the grapes in such wise, that not a fox in the world would have ever tried to reach them again.

THE CAT AND THE LOOKING-GLASS.

ARDENT philosophers, who pass your days endeavouring to explain that which is inexplicable, deign to listen to an anecdote of the sagest Grimalkin the world ever produced!

A cat, perceiving a looking-glass on a lady's toilette-table, jumped up to examine it; but was struck with astonishment at perceiving, as he thought, one of his brethren, in a threatening attitude! Our Puss wishing to join company, finds himself stopped. Surprised, he concludes the glass to be transparent, and goes to the other side, finds nothing, returns, and again the intruder is before him. After a little reflection, lest the other should escape while he walks round the glass, he perches himself astride on the top, with one paw on either side, so that he can seize in any direction. Making sure of his prey, he inclines his head gently towards the glass, and catches sight of an ear, then of two. Instantly darting his claws to the right and left, he loses his equilibrium, falls, and has caught nothing. Without waiting any longer to find out that which he cannot comprehend, he forsakes the looking-glass, saying: "What do I care about penetrating this mystery? I had better return to the kitchen, and catch a mouse for dinner."

THE WOLF AND THE HUNTSMAN.

A HUNTSMAN, having brought down a doe, perceived a fawn, and letting fly an arrow, made her keep company with the defunct. Both lay on the turf. The prey was fairly earned; any moderate huntsman would have been content. However, a wild-boar, a superb and enormous monster, again tempts our archer; the beast falls stunned by the force of the blow.* Surely here was enough? But no! nothing can satisfy the vast appetite of a conqueror. While the boar was coming to himself, the archer perceives a partridge, and, levelling his cross-bow, prepares to shoot, when the wild-boar, collecting his remaining strength, rushes on the huntsman, transfixes him with his tusks, and dies avenged on his body.

A wolf, passing that way, beheld the piteous spectacle: "O! Fortune," said he, "I promise to build thee a temple. Four carcases! what a mine of wealth! but I must nevertheless economise them: these windfalls are scarce." (Thus do misers excuse themselves.) "I shall have enough," said the wolf, "for at least a month: one, two, three, four bodies; just four complete weeks, if I know anything of arithmetic. In two days I shall begin, and in the mean time will eat this bow-string, which is doubtless made of real gut; the odour of it is sufficient." Thus speaking he flies at the bow, which being spanned, goes off, and sends the arrow through the heart of the wolf.

THE FOX.

A FOX, closely followed by the hounds, saved himself by springing on to a wall. In order to get down with ease on the other side, he caught hold of a thorn-bush, and arrived safely at the bottom, with the exception of being severely scratched by the thorns. "Wretched help," cried the fox, "why could you not render assistance, without injuring those who relied upon you?"

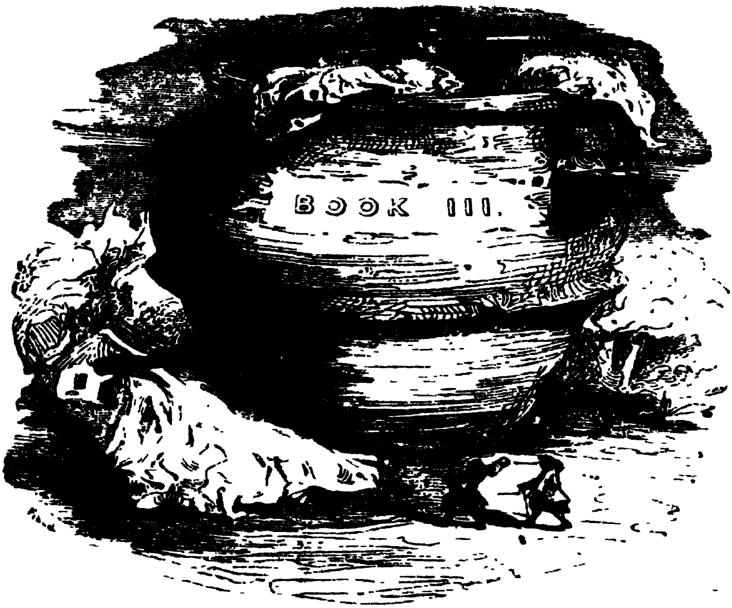
THE PAROQUET AND THE DOVE.

A paroquet and dove met,—
So says the rhyme,—
To fly a race together,
Once upon a time.
To guess who won the wager
Were an easy thing,
For one who ever saw them
Both upon the wing.
"Stop!" cried the paroquet,
When he was far behind;
"That you are grey and ugly
Comes into my mind.

"Stop!" he cried louder,—
Being hardly heard.—
"You were always thought
A very silly bird.
Get from before me—
Now that I think—
You were hatched upon a dunghill:
Faugh!—how you stink!"—
"This," the dove made answer,
"Is nothing to the case:
What we came here for,
Was to fly a race."

When in others' words or deeds
True merit he espies,
'Tis thus the fool attacks
The person of the wise.




BOOK III.



FABLES.

BOOK III.

THE HORSE AND THE LEOPARD.



SELF-PRESERVATION is the law of Nature; if a man suspects false play, he does rightly in endeavouring to circumvent the trick, providing always that it be managed without the breach of faith and honesty.

A hungry leopard having for some time laid in wait for his prey, at length espied a horse grazing. Knowing the nag to be swift of foot, he disguised himself as a physician, and in order to make his intended victim admire his wisdom, told him that he belonged to the college, and then made use of a few scientific terms which he had some how or other acquired, to shew the nature of his profession and convince his unsuspecting prey that he was entitled to the character he had assumed.

The horse perceiving his design, takes his cue accordingly. "Some days ago," said he, "I chanced to run a thorn into my foot, which is still very painful."—"Oh! is that all," said the doctor, "hold up your leg, "I'll soon ease you."

Without more ado, the leopard prepares to execute his treacherous design: but the horse being on the alert, gave the doctor such a kick, that he lay stunned on the plain, while the patient scampered off unhurt.

THE CORPSE AND THE CURATE.

A CORPSE was passing on the road,
Towards it's long and last abode;
And with it went a curate merry,
The cold and stiff defunct to bury.
Wrapt in a shroud, the lump of clay
Within a leaden coffin lay,
His only robe a winding-sheet,
In winter's cold and summer's heat;
Henceforth in damp sepulchral dirt,
Doom'd never more to change his shirt!
No matter!—We must all endure it!
He rode in state beside the curate,
Who chaunted with religious care
Meet orisons, and many a prayer;
The lessons, psalms, responses, verses,—
Sad, solemn, serenade of hearses.
Yet duly thus, or said or sung,
They only occupied his tongue,
His mind was brooding o'er the gains
Accruing from these pious pains.
His looks intent, and eager eyes,
Seemed fearful he might lose his prize;
And pensively appear'd to count
To what the funeral fees amount—
In money, cloth—in waxen lights,
Scarf, gloves, and other perquisites:
Of wine he deemed 'em worth a barrel,
And something over for apparel,
For presents to his maid, and—niece,—
At least a petticoat apiece.
Rapt in these pleasing meditations—
Indulging fond anticipations,
A sudden shock—(the coachman's blunder,)
Hurled headlong both,—the curate under.
Dashed to the ground, the corpse and pastor
Felt not alike the deep disaster:
The corpse was dead enough before,
And having died, could die no more,
From life's long labours once releast;—
Not so the visionary priest:
Of health, and hope, and spirits full,
The falling coffin crack'd his skull;
Despatched at once from musing glee,
To death's eternal reverie.

THE FIGHTING-COCKS AND THE TURKEY.

Two cocks of the genuine game-breed met by chance upon the confines of their respective walks. To such great and heroic souls, the smallest matter imaginable affords occasion for dispute. They approach each other with pride and indignation, they look defiance; they crow a challenge, and immediately commence a bloody battle. It was fought on both sides with so much courage and dexterity; they gave and received such desperate wounds, that they both laid down upon the turf utterly spent, blinded, and disabled. While this was their situation, a turkey, that had been a spectator of all that passed between them, drew near to the field of battle, and reproved them in this manner; "How foolish and absurd has been your quarrel, my good neighbours! A more ridiculous one could scarcely have happened among the most contentious of all creatures, men. Because you have crowed perhaps in each other's hearing, or one of you has picked up a grain of corn upon the territories of his rival, you have both rendered yourselves miserable for the remainder of your days."

THE BEAR.

A BEAR, who was bred in the savage deserts of Siberia, had an inclination to see the world. He travelled from forest to forest, and from one kingdom to another, making many profound observations in his way. Among the rest of his excursions he came by accident into a farmer's yard, where he saw a number of poultry standing to drink by the side of a pool. Observing that at every sip they turned up their heads towards the sky, he could not forbear enquiring the reason of so peculiar a ceremony. They told him, that it was their way of returning thanks to Heaven for the benefits they received; and was indeed an ancient and religious custom, which they could not, with a safe conscience, or without impiety, omit. Here the bear burst into a fit of laughter, at once mimicking their gestures, and ridiculing their superstition, in a most contemptuous manner. On this the cock, with a boldness suitable to his character, addressed him in the following words: "As you are a stranger, sir, you may, perhaps, be excused the indecency of this behaviour; yet give me leave to tell you, that none but a bear would ridicule any religious ceremony whatsoever, in the presence of those who believe them to be of importance."

THE WILD APPLE-TREE.

A SWARM of bees settled and built their hive in the hollow trunk of a wild apple-tree. They soon filled it with the treasures of their honey, and the tree became so proud in consequence, that it despised all its neighbours.

Hereupon a rose-bush thus addressed it: "Miserable pride on account of borrowed sweetness! Is your fruit, therefore, the less bitter? Sweeten it with your honey if you can, for only then will you be prized by mankind!"

THE FRUITS OF THE MARKET

'Twas when the market overflows
With all the fruits September shews,
Alice a careful prudent maid,
Cash in her hand, the stalls surveyed,
And judged of what she wish'd to buy,
With frugal, shrewd and skilful eye.
A thousand baskets, well dispos'd,
Their different hues to sight disclos'd :
But these allurements serv'd to screen
From notice fruits decayed or green,
Which by the wicked wiles of trade
In second rows were slily laid.
And strewed with flowers. Thus now they treat us;
In every country gull and cheat us.
Shew me the clime discover'd yet,
By craft and knavery not beset.
The snare distinctly Alice spies ;
And wisely, therefore nothing buys :
Goes empty home, and, in her heart,
Abhors the fruiterer's odious art.
Poor girl ! she with vexation cried;
Her kind endeavour thus destroyed
To please her worthy master's heart,
And treat him with a nice dessert.
A sage, who at his window stood,
To view the passing multitude,
Sees her—descends and ask the cause,
Which from her breast these murmurs draws,
She tells her tale without disguise :
" Go, pretty dear," the sage replies,
" Thus always act with prudent care :
—But now resume your cheerful air.
Go to your master you revere,
Whose comforts you account so dear,
Bid him, from me, in each concern
Of intercourse with men, to learn
Th' enquiring care and cautious views,
Which you in buying apples, use :
And if his understanding's good,
I promise you his gratitude."

This lesson should be valued more
Than all the fruits in Autumn's store.

THE CROW AND THE RAVEN.

A RAVEN establishing himself near the habitations of men, sat himself up for a foreteller of events. The crow hearing the fame of his predictions, also undertakes to penetrate the future. Seeing some company approaching, he perches on the branch of a tree near them, and begins croaking his direful forebodings. At first they were much alarmed, but looking up, and espying the truth: "There is nothing to fear," said they, "it is merely a crow chattering."

All men of sense suspect those empty fools who affect things beyond their faculties. Buffoons, quacks, and all vain pretenders fall under the moral of this Fable. A fool may wear the doctor's gown and cap; but these will make him no philosopher; either by his speech or mien he will surely betray that he is nothing more than a chattering crow.

THE DOVE.

A DOVE, that had a mate and young ones, happening to spy her cage-door open, was driven by a sudden impulse to fly out into an adjacent grove. There, perched upon the bough of a sycamore, she sat as it were wrapt in deep contemplation: not recovering from her reverie, until the owner drew nigh unseen, and brought her back to her little family. "Art thou not ashamed then," said her mate, "thus to desert thy helpless offspring? Art thou not base to abandon me, for the company of birds to whom thou art a stranger? Could I have harboured such a thought? I, who have been ever constant to our first engagement; and must have died of mere despair, hadst thou not returned to my embraces. But how alas, returned! Not, as it seems, by choice but ensnared by dint of artifice, and brought hither by restraint."—"Have patience," replied the rambler, and hear the plea of thy repentant mate. Witness all ye powers of wedlock, ye that know what passes in the hearts of doves, if ever, before this unhappy moment, I felt a wish to part from thee! the door, so seldom open, allowed but one moment for deliberation, and I happened to decide amiss. When removed to yonder wood, the air of liberty breathed so sweet, that, with horror I speak it, I felt a suspense about returning to the cage. Pardon, I pray thee, this one crime, and be well assured I will never repeat it. And that thou mayst be the more induced to pardon me, know that the love of liberty burns ever the strongest in bosoms that are most open to conjugal affection and the love of their young.

THE STAG AND THE FOX.

"WHAT is now to become of us poor weak creatures?" said a stag to a fox, "the lion has entered into an alliance with the wolf!"

"With the wolf?" said the fox. "That may well pass! The lion roars, the wolf howls; and so you will be able to save yourself betimes by flight. But should the mighty lion join company with the skulking lynx, then indeed there would be no hope for us."

THE OSTRICH AND THE PELICAN.

The ostrich one day met the pelican, and observing her breast all bloody, "Good Heavens!" said she to her, "what is the matter? What has befallen you? You certainly have been seized by some savage beast of prey, and have with difficulty escaped from his merciless paws."—"Do not be surprised, friend," replied the pelican: "no such accident, nor indeed anything more than common, hath happened to me. I have only been engaged in an ordinary employment of tending my nest, of feeding my dear little ones, and nourishing them with the vital blood from my bosom."—"Your answer," returned the ostrich, "astonishes me still more than the horrid figure you make. What! Is this your practice, to tear your own flesh, to spill your own blood, and to sacrifice yourself in this cruel manner to the importunate cravings of your young ones? I know not which to pity most, your misery or your folly. Be advised by me: have some regard for yourself; and leave off this barbarous custom of mangling your own body; as for your children, commit them to the care of Providence, and make yourself quite easy about them. My example may be of use to you. I lay my eggs upon the ground, and just cover them lightly over with sand. If they have the good luck to escape being crushed by the tread of man or beast, the warmth of the sun broods upon and hatches them; and in due time my young ones come forth. I leave them to be nursed by Nature, and fostered by the elements; I give myself no trouble about them, and I neither know nor care what becomes of them."—"Unhappy wretch!" said the pelican, "who art hardened against thy offspring, and through want of natural affection renderest thy labour fruitless to thyself! who knowest not the sweets of a parent's anxiety, the tender delight of a mother's sufferings! It is not I, but thou that art cruel to thy own flesh. Thy insensibility may exempt thee from a temporary inconvenience, and some trifling pangs; but at the same time it makes thee inattentive to a most necessary duty, and incapable of relishing the pleasure that attends it; a pleasure, the most exquisite that Nature hath indulged us with; in which pain itself is swallowed up and lost, or only serves to heighten the enjoyment."

THE SNAIL AND THE STATUE.

A statue of the Medicean Venus was erected in a grove sacred to beauty and the fine arts. Its modest attitude, its elegant proportions, assisted by the situation in which it was placed, attracted the regard of every delicate observer. A snail, who had fixed himself beneath the moulding of the pedestal, beheld with an evil eye the admiration it excited. Accordingly, watching his opportunity, he strove, by trailing his filthy slime over every limb and feature, to obliterate those beauties which he could not endure to hear so much applauded. An honest linnet, however, who observed him at his dirty work, took the freedom to assure him that he would infallibly lose his labour. "For, although," said he, "to an injudicious eye, thou mayest sully the perfections of this finished piece, yet a more accurate and close inspector will discover its beauty, through all the blemishes with which thou hast endeavoured to disguise it."

THE GOOSE AND THE SWANS.

I HATE the face, however fair,
That carries an affected air;
The lisping tone, the shape constrained,
The studied look, the passion feigned,
Are fopperies, which only tend
To injure what they strive to mend.
With what superior grace enchants
The face which Nature's pencil paints!
Where eyes, unexercised in art
Glow with the meaning of the heart!
Where freedom and good-humour sit,
And easy gaiety and wit!
Though perfect beauty be not there,
The master lines, the finished air,
We catch from every look delight,
And grow enamoured at the sight:
For beauty, though we all approve,
Excites our wonder more than love;
While the agreeable strikes sure,
And gives the wounds we cannot cure.
Why then, my Amoret, this care
That forms you, in effect, less fair?
If Nature on your cheek bestows
A bloom that emulates the rose,
Or from some heavenly image drew
A form Apelles never knew,
Your ill-judg'd aid will you impart,
And spoil by meretricious art?
Or had you, Nature's error, come
Abortive from the mother's womb.
Your forming care she still rejects,
Which only heightens her defects.
When such, of glittering jewels proud,
Still press the foremost in the crowd,
At every public show are seen,
With look awry, and awkward mien,
The gaudy dress attracts the eye,
And magnifies deformity.
Nature may underdo her part,
But seldom wants the help of art;
Trust her, she is your surest friend,
Nor made your form for you to mend.
A goose, affected, empty, vain,
The shrillest of the cackling train,

With proud and elevated crest,
Precedence claimed above the rest.
Says she: "I laugh at human race,
Who say geese hobble in their pace,
Look here! the slandrous lie detect;
Not haughty man is so erect.
That peacock yonder! Lord, how vain
The creature's of his gaudy train!
If both were stript, I pawn my word,
A goose would be the finer bird.
Nature, to hide her own defects,
Her bungled work with finery decks,
Were geese set off with half that show,
Would men admire the peacocks? No!"
Thus vaunting, 'cross the mead she stalks,
The cackling breed attends her walks:
The sun shot down its noon-tide beams,
The swans were sporting on the streams;
Their snowy plumes and stately pride
Provoked her spleen. "Why there," she cried,
"Again what arrogance we see!
Those creatures! how they mimic me!
Shall every fowl the waters skim,
Because we geese are known to swim!
Humility they soon shall learn,
And their own emptiness discern."
So saying with extended wings,
Lightly upon the wave she springs;
Her bosom swells, she spreads her plumes,
And the swan's stately crest assumes.
Contempt and mockery ensued,
And bursts of laughter shook the flood.
A swan, superior to the rest,
Sprung forth, and thus the fool addressed
"Conceited thing, elate with pride!
Thy affectation all deride:
These airs thy awkwardness impart,
And shew thee plainly as thou art.
Among thy equals of the flock
Thou hadst escaped the public mock;
And as thy parts to good conduce,
Been deemed an honest hobbling goose."
Learn hence to study wisdom's rules;
Know, foppery's the pride of fools;
And, striving Nature to conceal,
You only her defects reveal.



THE DOG WITH CROPPED EARS.

THE DOG WITH THE CROPPED EARS.

"WHAT crime have I committed that I should be thus mutilated by my own master?" pensively exclaimed Jowler, a young mastiff. "Here's a pretty condition for a dog of my pretensions! How can I shew my face among my friends? Oh! king of the beasts, or rather their tyrant, who would dare to treat you thus?" His complaints were not unfounded, for that very morning, his master, despite the piercing shrieks of our young canine friend, had barbarously cut off his long, pendant ears. Jowler expected nothing less than to give up the ghost. As he advanced in years, he perceived that he gained more than he had lost by his mutilation; for, being naturally inclined to fight with others, he would often have returned home with this part disfigured in a hundred places. A quarrelsome dog always has his ears lacerated.

The less we leave others to lay hold of the better. When one has but one point to defend, it should be protected for fear of accident. Take for example master Jowler, who, being armed with a spiked collar, and having about as much ear as a bird, a wolf would be puzzled to know where to tackle him.

THE KING, THE RIVER, AND THE HANDFUL OF EARTH.

A KING, new chosen in a state
Where blood had clos'd the dire debate,
Resolved to reign with arts so wise
That discord never more should rise.
Hard by there liv'd an aged Santon,
—The oracle of all the Canton.
Him for advice, the monarch sought,
And begg'd some rule, by wisdom taught,
Some sage receipt, some holy charm,
To govern free from risk of harm,
The fierce and independent tribe,
To whom he must his crown ascribe.
"Son," quoth the sage, "I like your care:
Few are the kings that here repair,
To ask the aid they greatly need—
But you, thank God, shall find your meed.
Take in your hand that lump of clay;
And to the river bend your way:
Then trace it back, till, by the force
Of this small clod, you check its course.
There in its bed, you'll find a stone,
On which by heavenly hands alone
The counsels you have wisely crav'd,
In golden letters are engrav'd.
Away my son, the river's near:
I can discern its margin here.

But choose a steed not apt to tire;
—Four days your journey will require"
This said the Anchorite rever'd
Turned to his cell, and disappear'd.
With clod in hand, the prince complies,
While hope and courage fill his eyes:
No foolish sceptic, rash, and blind,
But firm, from purity of mind,
And rectitude of judgment, he—
And hence esteemed the more by me.
Straight to the stream the monarch hies,
And, wondering views its mighty size:
For how, with this poor handful, stem
The volume of so vast a stream?
As well might one a knife receive,
Atlas or Caucasus to cleave.
Yet still, with persevering mind,
The brink he coasted, as enjoin'd,
When the third day began to gleam,,
(Advancing still against the stream)
A foretaste of success appear'd!
With hopes confirmed, with spirits cheer'd,
He saw the current could not float,
With all its depth, a single boat.
The fourth, he reached a rocky steep.
From whose foundations, oozing deep,
The river's feeble fountain well'd
By countless rills progressive swelled.
'Twas here the clod, with ease at last,
Achieved the work which seem'd so vast.
And, resting here, the monarch weigh'd
The admonition thus conveyed.
In all affairs he call'd to mind,
'Tis wise the fountain-head to find,
And easy (like the river's course)
To stop an evil at its source.

THE SHEEP AND THE SWALLOW.

A SWALLOW alighted on a sheep to pluck a little wool from his back, for her nest. The sheep, not being inclined to part with any, tried to shake off the intruder. "What makes you so snappish with me?" said the swallow. "You allow the shepherd to shear you of your wool from head to foot and yet deny me the slightest morsel. What can be the reason?"

"It is," replied the sheep, "because you know not how to take off my wool in the same easy manner as the shepherd."

THE HORSE AND THE GOAT.

BENEATH a spreading beech reclin'd
To charm a simple village hind,
A fiddler play'd a sprightly strain,
That echo bore across the plain.—
Struck with the viol's lively sound,
The goat in transports leap'd around,
And capering, wild, with bosom gay,
Thus jeered the horse, who near him lay :—
"My honest friend, why thus supine?
Dost thou not hear those strains divine?
Though little thee they interest,
They yield great pleasure to my breast :
For know, devoid of pompous words,
Those strings, whence flow such sweet accords.
And pour such music o'er the glade,
Were from a comrade's bowels made ;
A gentle goat, that full of glee,
Once laughed, and sung, and danced like me :
And, haply, when this vital breath
Shall leave me, and I sink in death,
E'en from my entrails human art
Shall make what music shall impart."
The horse recover'd from his toil,
Rear'd high his head, and, with a smile,
Addressed the goat : "In truth my friend,
Did I not great assistance lend,
Those artless strains you thus approve
Had ne'er been heard to charm the grove ;
Nor thou hadst prais'd ; but that the hair
Torn from my flowing mane, with care,
By cruel man, who mocks the pain
And all the labour I sustain,
Is moved thy twisted gut along,
And hence that melody of song.—
It wholly compensates my woe,
And makes me really blest to know,
In all conditions while I live,
To man such pleasures I can give :
For music's soul-bewitching power
Soothes every ill, in every hour.
Now though, my friend, we both unite
To give the ravished ear delight,
The difference in one point is made,
I please when living—you when dead!"

THE JEALOUS COCK.

A cock hearing another crow at the dawn of day, and knowing it to be an hour sooner than he was wont to proclaim the rising of the sun, began to apprehend that there was an assignation between a rival and his favourite hen. His suspicions were confirmed by seeing all the hens quitting their roost and sallying forth. He was resolved to be on the watch, and immediately followed; but refrained from crowing that there might be no notice of his approach. He heard his supposed rival give the signal again, and to his mortification perceived his favourite on a high bank. Being resolved to take revenge, he got unawares behind her, and, began to peck her with such fury, that both he and the hen rolled down a precipice.

Of all the passions which distract and agitate the mind, none is so bad and rancorous as jealousy. Many are of opinion that none but weak and superstitous minds can harbour this unworthy passion. But Shakspere, and other eminent writers, prove that the most brave and most meritorious may be subject to it. If jealousy be blind, so is love, and some of our heroes have been bewildered by both. Jealousy arises from a nice feeling of honour, and may be justly deemed a weakness, as it makes fools of the wisest: it starts at shadows, and prevents the judgment from being properly exercised; it drives reason from her throne, and by rashness and impetuosity becomes absolute madness.

THE FAIRIES' GIFT.

Two benevolent fairies attended at the birth of a young prince, who afterwards became one of the greatest monarchs his country had ever boasted.

"I bestow on my *protegé*," said one, "the piercing eye of the eagle, from whose view not the smallest fly can escape in this extensive kingdom.

"The gift is noble," interrupted the second fairy. "The prince will become a discerning monarch. But the eagle is not blessed with his keen sight merely to discover the smallest fly; he possesses also a supreme contempt for chasing them. And this gift do I bestow on the prince."

"Thanks, dearest sister for this wise restriction," resumed the first fairy. "Nothing is more true, than that many would have been much greater kings, if, with their extreme penetration, they had less often made use thereof on the most trifling occasions."

THE BULL AND THE GOAT.

The bull being pursued by the lion, made towards a cave, in which he designed to secure himself, but was opposed just at the entrance by a goat, who had got possession before him, and threatening a kind of defiance with his horns, seemed resolved to dispute the path with him. The bull, who thought he had no time to lose in a contest of this nature, immediately made off again, but told the goat that it was not for fear of him or his defiances; "For," said he, "if the lion were not so near, I would soon make you know the difference between a bull and goat.

THE DOG BAULKED OF HIS DINNER.

"Think yourself sure of nothing till you've got it:"
This is the lesson of the day.
In metaphoric language I might say,
Count not your bird before you've shot it.
Quote proverb: "Twixt the cup and lip
There's many a slip."
Not every guest invited sits at table,
So says *my* fable.

A man once gave a dinner to his friend:
His friend!—his patron I should rather think,
By all the loads of meat and drink,
And fruits and jellies without end,
Sent home the morning of the feast.
Jowler, his dog, a social beast,
Soon as he smelt the matter out, away
Scampers to old acquaintance Tray.
And with expressions kind and hearty
Invites him to the party.

Tray wanted little pressing to a dinner;
He was, in truth, a gormandizing sinner,
He licked his chops and wagged his tail;
"Dear friend!" he cried, "I will not fail:
But what's your hour?"—
"We dine at four;
But if you come an hour too soon,
You'll find there's something to be done."

His friend withdrawn, Tray, full of glee,
As blythe as blythe could be,
Skipped, danced, and played full many an antic,
Like one half frantic,
Then sober in the sun lay winking,
But could not sleep for thinking.
He thought on every dainty dish,
Fried, boiled, and roast,
Flesh, fowl, and fish,
With tripes and toast,
Fit for a dog to eat;
And in his fancy made a treat,
Might grace a bill of fare
For my Lord Mayor.

At length, just on the stroke of three,
Forth sallied he;
And through a well-known hole,
He slily stole
Pop on the scene of action.
Here he beheld, with wondrous satisfaction,
All hands employed in drawing, stuffing,
Skewering, spitting and basting:
The red-faced cook sweating and puffing.
Chopping, mixing, and tasting.
Tray sculked about, now here, now there,
Peeped into this, and smelt at that,
And licked the gravy and the fat,
And cried: "O rare! how I shall fare!"

But Fortune, spiteful as Old Nick,
Resolved to play our dog a trick;
She made the cook
Just cast a look
Where Tray, beneath the dresser lying,
His promised bliss was eyeing.

A cook while cooking is a sort of fury,
A maxim worth remembering, I assure ye.
Tray found it true,
And so may you,
If e'er you choose to try.
"How now," quoth she, "what's this I spy.
A nasty cur! who let him in?
Would he were hanged with all his kin!
A pretty kitchen guest indeed!
But I shall pack him off with speed!"

So saying, on poor Tray she flew,
And dragged the culprit forth to view:
Then, to his terror and amazement,
Whirled him like lightning through the casement.

THE HART AND THE FOX.

An envious fox, after having for a considerable time admired the symmetry of a fine hart, began to censure the thinness of his legs. "Indeed!" replied the hart, to him who brought this intelligence, "now am I more particularly sensible of the indulgent kindness of Nature in forming me, since envy can find but one fault in my shape!"

THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERD'S DOG.

A WOLF, ranging over the forest, came within the borders of a sheep-walk; when meeting with a shepherd's dog, that with a surly sort of growl demanded his business there, he thought proper to put on as innocent an appearance as he could, and protested upon his honour that he meant not the least offence. "I am afraid," said the dog, "the pledge of your honour is but a poor deposit for your honesty: you must not take it amiss if I object to the security."—"No slur upon my reputation," replied the wolf, "I beg of you. My sense of honour is as delicate, as my great achievements are renowned. I would not leave a stain upon my memory for the world."—"The fame of what are generally called great achievements is very precious, to be sure," returned the dog; "almost equal to the character of an excellent butcher, a gallant highwayman, or an expert assassin." While the dog was yet speaking, a lamb happened to stray within reach of our hero. The temptation was stronger than he was able to resist; he sprung upon his prey, and was scouring hastily away with it. However, the dog seized and held him till the arrival of the shepherd, who took measures for his execution. Just as he was going to despatch him; "I observed," said the dog, "that one of your noble achievements is the destruction of the innocent. You are welcome to the renown, as you are also to the reward of it. As for me, I shall prefer the credit of having honestly defended my master's property, to any fame you have acquired by thus heroically invading it."

THE STAG AND THE FAWN.

A STAG, grown old and mischievous, was, according to custom, stamping with his foot, making offers with his head, and bellowing so terribly, that the whole herd quaked for fear of him; when one of the little fawns coming up, addressed him to this purpose:—"Pray, what is the reason that you, who are so stout and formidable at all other times, if you do but hear the cry of the hounds, are ready to fly out of your skin for fear?"—"What you observe is true," replied the stag, "though I know not how to account for it; I am indeed vigorous and able enough, I think, to make my part good any where, and often resolve with myself, that nothing shall ever dismay my courage for the future. But alas! I no sooner hear the voice of a hound, but all my spirits fail me, and I cannot help making off as fast as my legs can carry me."

THE RAVEN.

THE raven observed that the eagle brooded thirty days over her eggs. "Doubtless," said she, "that is the reason why the eaglets are so sharp-sighted and strong. Good! I'll try the same method."

Since that period she has always brooded thirty days over her eggs; but, hitherto, has only succeeded in hatching miserable ravens.

THE LION IN LOVE.

The lion, by chance, saw a fair maid, the forester's daughter, as she was tripping over a lawn, and fell in love with her. Nay, so violent was his passion, that he could not live unless he made her his own; so that, without any more delay, he broke his mind to the father, and demanded the damsel for his wife. The man, odd as the proposal seemed at first, soon recollected, that, by complying, he might get the lion into his power; but, by refusing him, would only exasperate and provoke his rage; he therefore consented, but told him it must be upon these conditions; that, considering the girl was young and tender, he must agree to have his teeth pulled out, and his claws cut off, least he should hurt her, or at least frighten her with the apprehension of them. The lion was too much in love to hesitate; but was no sooner deprived of his teeth and claws, than the treacherous forester attacked him with a huge club, and knocked his brains out.

Of all the ill consequences that may attend upon that blind passion, love, none proves so fatal as that of its drawing people into a sudden and ill-concerted marriage. They commit a rash action during a fit of madness, of which, as soon as they come to themselves, they find reason to repent as long as they live. Many an unthinking young fellow has been treated as the lion in the Fable. He has, perhaps, had nothing valuable belonging to him but his estate, and the writings which made his title to it; and if he is so far captivated as to be persuaded to part with these, his teeth and claws are gone, and he lies entirely at the mercy of madam and her relations. All the favour he is to expect after this, is from the accidental goodness of the family he falls into; which, if it happen to be of a particular strain, will not fail to keep him in distant subjection, after they have stripped him of all his power. Nothing but true friendship and mutual interest, can keep up reciprocal love between the conjugal pair; and when that is wanting, nothing but contempt and aversion remain to supply the its place matrimony then becomes a downright state of enmity and hostility. And what a miserable case he must be in, who has put himself and his whole power into the hands of his enemy, let those consider, who, while they are in their sober senses, abhor the thoughts of being betrayed into their ruin, by following the impulse of a blind, unheeding passion.

SOLOMON'S GHOST.

A venerable old man, despite his years and the heat of the day, was ploughing his field with his own hand, and sowing the grain in the willing earth, in anticipation of the harvest it would produce.

Suddenly beneath the deep shadow of a spreading oak, a divine apparition stood before him! The old man was seized with affright.

"I am Solomon," said the phantom encouragingly. "What dost thou here, old friend?

"If thou art Soloman," said the owner of the field, "how canst thou ask? In my youth I learnt from the ant to be industrious and to accumulate wealth. That which I then learnt I now practise."

"Thou hast learnt but the half of thy lesson," pursued the spirit. "Go once more to the ant, and she will teach thee to rest in the winter of thy existence, and enjoy what thou hast earned."



THE OBSEQUIES OF THE LIONESS.

THE OBSEQUIES OF THE LIONESS.

The lion having suddenly lost his queen, every one hastened to shew his allegiance to the monarch, by offering consolation. These compliments, alas! served but to increase the widower's affliction. Due notice was given throughout the kingdom, that the obsequies would be performed at a certain time and place; his officers were ordered to be in attendance, to regulate the ceremony, and place the company according to their respective rank. One may well judge no one absented himself. The monarch gave way to his grief, and the whole cave, lions having no other temples, resounded with his cries. After his example, all the courtiers roared in their different tones. A court is a sort of place where every one is either sorrowful, gay, or indifferent to everything, just as the reigning prince may think fit; or if any one is not actually, he at least tries to appear so; each endeavours to mimic the master. It is truly said, that one mind animates a thousand bodies, clearly shewing, that human beings are mere machines.

But let us return to our subject. The stag alone shed no tears. How could he, forsooth? The death of the queen avenged him: she had formerly strangled his wife and son. A courtier thought fit to inform the bereaved monarch, and even affirmed that he had seen the stag laugh. The rage of a king, says Solomon, is terrible, and especially that of a lion-king. "Pitiful forester!" he exclaimed. "darest thou laugh when all around are dissolved in tears? We will not soil our royal claws with thy profane blood! Do thou, brave wolf, avenge our queen, by immolating this traitor to her august manes." Hereupon the stag replied; "Sire, the time for weeping is passed; grief is here superfluous. Your revered spouse appeared to me but now, reposing on a bed of roses; I instantly recognized her. 'Friend,' said she to me, 'have done with this funereal pomp, cease these useless tears. I have tasted a thousand delights in the Elysian fields, conversing with those who are saints like myself. Let the king's despair remain for some time unchecked, it gratifies me.'" Scarcely had he spoken, when every one shouted: "A miracle! a miracle!" The stag, instead of being punished, received a handsome donation.

Do but entertain a king with dreams, flatter, and tell him a few pleasant lies: whatever may be his indignation against you, he will swallow the bait, and make you his dearest friend.

THE BENEFACTORS.

"Have you in the creation, any greater benefactor than me?" asked the bee of a man.

"Most undoubtedly," replied the man.

"Name him!"

"The sheep! For his wool is necessary to me, and your honey is only a luxury. And I will give you another reason, Mrs. Bee, why I consider the sheep a greater benefactor than you. The sheep gives me his wool without the least trouble or danger; but when I take your honey, you keep me in constant apprehension of your sting."

THE LAWYER AND JUSTICE.

LOVE! thou divinest good below!
Thy pure delights few mortals know:
Our rebel hearts thy sway disown,
While tyrant lust usurps thy throne.
The bounteous God of Nature made
The sexes for each other's aid;
Their mutual talents to employ,
To lessen ills and heighten joy.
To weaker woman he assigned
The soft'ning gentleness of mind,
That can by sympathy impart
Its likeness to the roughest heart.
Her eyes with magic power endued,
To fire the dull, and awe the rude.
His rosy fingers on her face
Shed lavish every blooming grace,
And stamp'd (perfection to display)
His mildest image on her clay.
  Man, active, resolute and bold,
He fashion'd in a different mould,
With useful arts his mind informed,
His breast with nobler passions warmed;
He gave him knowledge, taste and sense,
And courage for the fair's defence.
Her frame, resistless to each wrong,
Demands protection from the strong;
To man she flies when fear alarms,
And claims the temple of his arms.
  By Nature's author thus declared
The woman's sov'reign and her guard,
Shall man by treacherous wiles invade
The weakness he was meant to aid?
While beauty, given to inspire
Protecting love, and soft desire,
Lights up a wild-fire in the heart,
And to its own breast points the dart,
Becomes the spoiler's base pretence
To triumph over innocence.
  The wolf, that tears the timorous sheep,
Was never set the fold to keep;
Nor was the tiger, or the pard,
Meant the benighted trav'ller's guard;
But man, the wildest beast of prey,
Wears friendship's semblance to betray;

His strength against the weak employs;
And where he should protect, destroys.
"Past twelve o'clock," the watchman cried;
His brief the studious lawyer plied;
The all-prevailing fee lay nigh,
The earnest of to-morrow's lie.
Sudden, the furious winds arise,
The jarring casement shattered flies;
The doors admit a hollow sound,
And rattling from their hinges bound;
When Justice, in a blaze of light,
Revealed her radiant form to sight.
The wretch with thrilling horror shook;
Loose every joint and pale his look;
Not having seen her in the courts,
Or found her mentioned in reports,
He asked, with faltering tongue, her name,
Her errand there, and whence she came.
Sternly the white-robed shade replied
(A crimson glow her visage dyed);
"Canst thou be doubtful who I am?
Is Justice grown so strange a name?
Were not your courts for Justice raised?
'Twas there of old my altars blaz'd.
My guardian thee I did elect,
My sacred temple to protect,
That thou, and all thy venal tribe,
Should spurn the goddess for the bribe.
Aloud the ruined client cries,
Justice has neither ears nor eyes:
In foul alliance with the bar,
'Gainst me the judge denounces war.
And rarely issues his decree
But with intent to baffle me."
She paused—her breast with fury burned;
The trembling lawyer thus returned:
"I own, the charge is justly laid,
And weak th' excuse that can be made;
Yet search the spacious globe, and see
If all mankind are not like me.
"The gown-man, skill'd in Romish lies,
By faith's false glass deludes our eyes:
O'er conscience rides without controul,
And robs the man to save his soul.
"The doctor, with important face,
By sly design mistakes the case;

Prescribes, and spins out the disease,
To trick the patient of his fees.
"The soldier, rough with many a scar,
And red with slaughter leads the war:
If he a nation's trust betray,
The foe has offered double pay.
"When vice o'er all mankind prevails,
And weighty int'rest turns the scales,
Must I be better than the rest,
And harbour Justice in my breast?
On one side only take the fee,
Content with poverty and thee?"
"Thou blind to sense, and vile of mind,"
Th' exasperated shade rejoined,
"If virtue from the world is flown,
Will others' faults excuse thy own?
For sickly souls the priest was made;
Physicians for the body's aid,
The soldier guarded liberty,
Man, woman, and the lawyer me.
If all are faithless to their trust,
They leave not thee the less unjust.
Henceforth your pleadings I disclaim,
And bar the sanction of my name;
Within your courts it shall be read
That Justice from the law is fled."
She spoke; and hid in shades her face,
Till Hardwicke soothed her into grace.

THE TWO MERCHANTS

A PERSIAN merchant, having occasion to travel on business, deposited a hundredweight of silver with a neighbour. On his return he asked to have it restored to him. "Your silver!" said the other, "alas! I have it no longer: I regret to say that a rat has devoured the whole; I was very angry with my servants, but what could I do? Every one is liable to accidents." The merchant was astonished at this prodigy; but, nevertheless, pretended to believe it. Some days after, meeting the child of his perfidious neighbour, he carried him to his house; and, having concealed him, invited the father to dinner. The latter excused himself, and bursting into tears, said: "I beg of you to allow me to decline. Never again shall I know happiness. I had an only son, whom I loved better than my existence; alas! how shall I speak it? I have him no longer. He has been stolen from me: have pity on my misfortunes." The merchant replied: "Yesterday evening, about dusk, a screech-owl pounced upon your son, and carried him off to some old ruin."—"How can I credit," said the father, "that

an owl could ever carry off so large a booty? If necessary, my son could have caught the bird."—"I can't pretend to tell you how," replied the other, "excepting that I saw it, with my own eyes, and must observe that I cannot perceive what right you have to doubt it when I say so. What can there be remarkable in a screech-owl carrying off a child weighing but fifty pounds, when a rat will devour silver, and a whole hundred-weight too." The other, comprehending what he meant, gave the merchant his silver, who returned him his hopeful progeny.

A similar discussion happened between two travellers. One of them was of the class which sees nothing but through a magnifying glass; and finds every thing gigantic. "I have seen," he says, "a cabbage larger than a house."—"And I," says the other, "a saucepan as large as a church." The first laughs at him, the other replies: "Softly, friend, softly, the saucepan was made on purpose to boil your cabbage."

THE CHICKEN AND THE COCK.

A COCK who often was controll'd,
Though querulous ever, by the bold,
Was, through his insolence, one day,
Inveigled in a bloody fray,
And by a chicken, strange to tell,
To his disgrace, was beaten well.
This brilliant feat, by numbers praised.
To favour great the youngster raised
And justly of his victory proud,
Across the lawn he crowed aloud;
When, lo! the cock, who fled through fear,
Said in a tone that all might hear:—
"Fly, braggart, fly, and life enjoy,
I scorn to quarrel with a boy,
But when thy prime thou shalt attain,
Be cautious how we meet again!"
Yet it is told the village o'er,
With him he ne'er encountered more.

It chanced, howe'er, this touchy blade
Presum'd the precints to invade
Of one, worn out with care and age,
And coward like provoked his rage;
The veteran reared aloft his head,
And long he fought, and much he bled,
When finding nought could make him yield,
The dastard, strutting from the field,
Exclaimed, "I'll quit th' unequal fight,
And not in murder take delight;
But wert thou not so old, thy life
Should pay the forfeit of this strife!"

THE BEASTS STRIVING FOR PRECEDENCE.

IN FOUR FABLES.

I.

A serious dispute arose among the beasts, as to who should take precedence of his neighbour. "I propose," said the horse, "that we call in man to adjust the difference; he is not one of the disputants, and can therefore be more impartial."

"But has he sufficient understanding for it?" asked the mole. "It appears to me that it must be very acute to detect all our deeply-hidden perfections."

"That was well thought of!" said the marmot.

"Undoubtedly!" exclaimed also the hedge-hog. "I can never believe that man possesses sufficient penetration for the task."

"Silence!" commanded the horse. "We know well enough, that he who can place least reliance on the merits of his cause, is always the readiest to doubt the wisdom of his judge."

II.

Man, therefore, was constituted arbitrator. "Another word with thee," said the majestic lion to him, "before thou pronouncest judgment! By what standard dost thou intend fixing our relative worth?"

"By what standard? Doubtless," replied the man, "according as you are more or less useful to me."

"Excellent!" returned the offended lion. "How much lower in the scale should I rank than the ass! Man! thou canst not judge for us. Quit the assembly!"

III.

The man retired. "Now," said the sneering mole (and the marmot and hedge-hog again chimed in with their friend), "dost thou perceive, friend Dobbin? the lion also thinks that man is not fit to be our judge. The lion thinks like us."

"But from weightier reasons than ye!" said the lion, glancing contemptuously at the speaker.

IV.

The lion continued: "The struggle for precedency, now I consider all the circumstances, is but a sheer waste of time! Whether you regard me as the highest or the least, is perfectly immaterial. Enough, I know my power!—" Thus speaking, he rose, and left the assembly.

He was followed by the sage elephant, the fearless tiger, the grave bear, the cunning fox, the noble horse; in short, all who felt their own worth, or thought they felt it.

Those who went away last, and murmured most at the breaking up of the assembly, were—the ape and the donkey.

THE WASPS AND THE BEES.

There happened once a suit between
That insect tribe who serve a queen,
Those quaker-coated flies, I mean,
The industrious bees,
And the pert wasps; that roving pack
In yellow jackets trimmed with black,
Who, corsair-like, rob and attack,
Who 'er they please.

Of the dispute this was the ground,
The wasps some honey-combs had found,
Where a few bees were straggling round,
In an old tree.
It was their work, the wasps declare,
Ready through thick and thin to swear,
And to the court prefer their prayer
To make decree,

Lord Hornet, learned in the laws,
Sate on the bench to hear the cause;
Astute in pleas to find out flaws
Whene'er he chose,
In chancery or Nisi Prius:
Yet some his judgments would decry as
Having at times too strong a bias
For friends 'gainst foes.

His progress was not over speedy:
For years his advocates would plead ye,
And in the suit for fees were greedy.
However far gone.
So were the clients apt to mutter,
To hear the Big-wigs loudly utter,
Reply, rejoinder, and rebutter,
In endless jargon.

Now more sagacious than the rest,
An old bluff bee the court addrest,
And thus with warmth his mind exprest,
Whilst anger vexes:
"Long has your Lordship here been toiling,
The honey in dispute lies spoiling;
Both sides, the wheel of justice oiling,
Are dry as kecksies.

"Since nothing more can now be got,
Try if the plaintiff can or not
Make such a comb upon the spot,
And the defendant.
If to this plan the court agree,
Which side is right at once they'll see,
Your Lordship then may make decree,
And there's an end on't."

The judge assents :—the wasps decline,
The bees then gain their cause in fine.
Thus slowly does the law opine,
That sage old lady !
In the best things abuses lurk,
We almost wish for shorter work,
Even to imitate the Turk.
Ruled by a Cadi.

But such reform an empty dream is,
However straight her balance beam is,
The forms and fees of good Dame Themis
To vast wealth hoist her :—
Her records could strange stories tell ;
Winners and losers know too well
Their shares are often each a shell,
And *her's* the oyster !

THE TWO LINNETS.

A young linnet had the misfortune to be taken from the nest before it was we fledged, while his twin brother happily escaped, and passed his time among the joyous tenants of the air. The former had a small chain fastened to his pretty foot, and, after enduring much hunger and thirst, he was taught to raise his thimble-full of water, and open his seed-box. Having once entangled his foot in the chain, and his young master taking it off to disengage him, he flew out of a window that was open, and for a length of time enjoyed a repast of liberty and ease with his aërial companions. One day in harvest, as he and his twin-brother were seeking for food, they unhappily were ensnared by a bird-catcher, who imprisoned them in a cage. The elder, who had never been accustomed to confinement or misfortune, fluttered against the wires till he killed himself. the other, being habituated to sufferings and chains, bore his lot with patience, and at last became so familiarized to it, that he gained the good-will of his master, who, delighted with his gentleness and tricks, made the remainder of his life comfortable and happy.

Often would this linnet thank Heaven, in his matin song, that he had been taught in infancy to endure misfortune, which is the parent of fortitude and submission.



THE ACORN AND THE GOURD.

THE ACORN AND THE GOURD

"Methinks the world is oddly made,
And every thing amiss,"
A dull complaining Atheist said,
As stretch'd he lay beneath the shade,
And instanc'd it in in this :—

"Behold," quoth he, "that mighty thing,
A gourd so large and round,
Is held but by a little string,
Which upwards cannot make its spring,
Nor bear it from the ground :

"While on this oak an acorn small.
So disproportion'd grows,
That whosoe'er surveys this all—
This universal, casual ball,
Its ill-contrivance knows.

"My better judgment would have hung
The gourd upon the tree;
And left the acorn slightly strung,
'Mong things that on the surface sprung
And weak and feeble be."

No more the caviller could say,
No further faults disclose ;
For, upwards gazing as he lay,
An acorn loosened from its spray,
Fell down upon his nose.

From pain his eyes with tears ran o'er,
As punish'd for the sin.
Fool! if your gourds an oak-tree bore,
Thy whimsies would have work'd no more,
Nor skull have kept them in!

THE PEACOCK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

The peacock said to the nightingale, in a tone of disdain : "How ugly you are, when compared to me ;"—"Perhaps so!" replied the nightingale ; and immedietely flying away, perched upon a neighbouring elm, and sung most melodiously. Her notes attracted the attention of every passenger, who stopped to listen : and exclaimed, "How beautiful is her song!"—The proud peacock strutted about, and displayed her fine plumage, but no one remarked that she was beautiful.

THE YOUNG LION AND THE APE.

'Tis true, I blame your lover's choice,
Though flattered by the public voice
And peevish grow, and sick, to hear
His exclamations, "O how fair!"
I listen not to wild delights,
And transports of expected nights:
What is to me your hoard of charms,
The whiteness of your neck and arms?
Needs there no acquisition more
To keep contention from the door?
Yes: pass a fortnight, and you'll find
All beauty cloys, but of the mind.
Sense and good-humour ever prove
The surest cords to fasten love.
Yet, Phillis, simplest of your sex,
You never think but to perplex;
Coquetting it with every ape
That struts abroad in human shape;
Not that the coxcomb is your taste,
But that it stings your lover's breast.
To-morrow you resign the sway.
Prepar'd to honour and obey.
The tyrant mistress change for life,
To the submission of a wife,
Your follies if you can suspend,
And learn instruction from a friend:
Reluctant hear the first address.
Think often ere you answer Yes;
But, once resolved, throw off disguise,
And wear your wishes in your eyes;
With caution every look forbear
That might create one jealous fear,
A lover's ripening hopes confound,
Or give the generous breast a wound;
Contemn the girlish arts to teaze,
Nor use your power, unless to please;
For fools alone with rigour sway,
When, soon or late, they must obey.
The king of brutes, in life's decline,
Resolved dominion to resign;
The beasts were summoned to appear,
And bend before the royal heir.
They came; a day was fixed: the crowd
Before their future monarch bow'd.

A dapper monkey, pert and vain,
Stepped forth, and thus addressed the train:
"Why cringe, my friends, with slavish awe,
Before this pageant king of straw?
Shall we anticipate the hour,
And, ere we feel it, own his power?
The counsels of experience prize,
I know the maxims of the wise:
Subjection let us cast away,
And live the monarchs of to-day;
'Tis ours the vacant hand to spurn,
And play the tyrant each in turn.
So shall he right from wrong discern,
And mercy from oppression learn;
At others woes be taught to melt,
And loath the ills himself has felt."
He spoke—his bosom swell'd with pride:
The youthful lion thus replied:
"What madness prompts thee to provoke
My wrath, and dare th' impending stroke?
Thou wretched fool! can wrongs impart
Compassion to the feeling heart?
Or teach the grateful breast to glow
The hand to give, and eye to flow?
Learn'd in the practice of their schools,
From women thou hast drawn thy rules:
To them return; in such a cause,
From only such expect applause;
The partial sex I don't condemn,
For liking those who copy them."
Would'st thou the generous lion bind?
By kindness bribe him to be kind;
Good offices their likeness get,
And payment lessens not the debt;
With multiplying hand he gives
The good from others he receives:
Or for the bad makes fair return,
And pays with interest scorn for scorn.

THE APE AND THE DOG.

A POINTER had for some time taken particular notice of the leaps and vagaries of the ape, when the latter said: "Do you think that you could display such art and ingenuity? I suppose unless you meant to rival me, you would not be so observant."—"You very much mistake me," replied the dog; "it is my aim to learn wisdom from the fool, and by a close observation of your manners, to avoid the monkey tricks which you take so much pride in."

THE TOAD AND THE EPHEMERON

As some workmen were digging marble in a mountain of Scythia, they discerned a toad of an enormous size in the midst of a solid rock. They were very much surprised at so uncommon an appearance, and the more they considered the circumstances of it, the more their wonder increased. It was hard to conceive by what means this creature had preserved life, and received nourishment in so narrow a prison; and still more difficult to account for his birth and existence in a place so totally inaccessible to all of his species. They could conclude no otherwise, than that he was formed together with the rock in which he had been bred, and was coeval with the mountain itself. While they were pursuing these speculations, the toad sat swelling and bloating, till he was ready to burst with pride and self-importance; to which at last he thus gave vent: "Yes," said he, "you behold in me a specimen of the antediluvian race of animals. I was begotten before the flood. And who is there among the present upstart race of mortals, that shall dare to contend with me in nobility of birth, or dignity of character?" An ephemeron, sprung that morning from the river Hypanis, as he was flying about from place to place, chanced to be present, and observed all that passed with great attention and curiosity. "Vain boaster," said he, "what foundation hast thou for pride, either in thy descent, merely because it is ancient, or thy life because it has been long? What good qualities hast thou received from thy ancestors? Insignificant even to thyself, as well as useless to others, thou art almost as insensible as the block in which thou wast bred. Even I, that had my birth only from the scum of the neighbouring river, at the rising of this day's sun, and who shall die at its setting, have more reason to applaud my condition, than thou hast to be proud of thine. I have enjoyed the warmth of the sun, the light of the day, and the purity of the air. I have flown from stream to stream, from tree to tree, and from the plain to the mountain. I have provided for posterity, and shall leave behind me a numerous offspring, to people the next age of to morrow. In short, I have fulfilled all the ends of my being, and am happy. My whole life, 'tis true, is but of twelve hours; but even one hour of it is to be preferred to a thousand years of mere existence, which have been spent, like thine, in sloth, ignorance and stupidity.

THE PEACOCK.

The peacock, who at first was distinguished only by a crest of feathers, preferred a petition to Juno that he might be honoured also with a train. As the bird was a particular favourite, Juno readily enough assented; and his train was ordered to surpass that of every fowl in the creation. The minion, conscious of his superb appearance, thought it requisite to assume a proportionate dignity of gait and manners. The common poultry of the farm-yard were quite astonished at his magnificence: and even the pheasants themselves beheld him with an eye of envy. But when he attempted to fly, he perceived himself to have sacrificed all his activity to ostentation; and that he was encumbered by the pomp in which he placed his glory.

EDUCATION.

LARIDON and Cæsar were twin brothers, owing their origin to a famous sporting dog. They were handsome, well-proportioned, and courageous; these two dogs, however, had different pursuits; the one frequented the woods, the other the kitchen. Each had at first different names, but a certain scullion called the latter Laridon. The diversity of training, which preserved the excellence of the breed in the one, entirely reversed it in the other. Cæsar displayed a disposition for high adventure, and in the chase had brought many a stag and wild-boar to bay; by avoiding unworthy mistresses, he maintained the nobleness of the race whence he sprung; but Laridon, by a vulgar association with every passing object, only multiplied his breed, to produce a race of turnspits, which became common throughout France.

Alas! how many through not following the valuable advice of parents in due time, and neglecting to cultivate the gifts of Nature, sink into a like degeneracy; and from being Cæsars, become Laridons!

THE DRAGONS.

AN envoy from the Sultan's wide domain,
Who at Vienna's court had long resided,
Observ'd one day: "To me 'tis very plain
The armies by my master's power provided,
And muster'd underneath the Turkish firman
Are in their structure better than the German."

"Bah!" cried an Austrian, nettled at this praise.
"You think too highly of your own resources:
My master has dependants, who can raise
Troops full a match for all your Turkish forces."—
"I know your strength:—but if your ear you'll lend, I
Will tell a strange true story," said th' Effendi.

"Once on a time, on t'other side a hedge,
With hundred heads a monstrous snake I saw.
I felt some fear, I'll honestly allege,
The dragon seemed to wish me in his maw:
But 'mongst the pales and briars, and tangled bushes,
His hundred heads the Hydra vainly pushes.

"Then came, which struck me with still greater dread,
A second dragon with a host of tails.
But this vast serpent had a single head,
Which forced its way with ease thro' briars and pales.
This, noble Count, I venture to opine,
Marks the great difference 'twixt your Lord and mine."

THE FOX AMBASSADOR.

FIERCE war, of yore, King Lion wag'd
With Sultan Leopard, both enrag'd;
And each alike grown tired at last
Of staking fortune on a cast,
Plans, through a neutral power propos'd,
The basis of a peace disclos'd.
The Sultan then Sir Renard names,
To seal and settle mutual claims,
In character of Plenipo,
To his august and hairy foe.
The spotted council of advice
Took credit for so wise a choice;
They knew the wheedler's arts of winning;
His tricks, his diplomatic cunning;
And e'en, should things require, they knew
He could be base and treacherous too;
Nor, doubted, in the terms, to cheat
The lion and his solemn suite.
At the first interview, a meeting
For compliment and mutual greeting,
The fox so smooth a courtier shone
His party deemed the day their own,
But, forms despatched, when contracts came
And binding oaths their care to claim,
Sir Renard's flights and fetches failed,
Nor perjuries nor quirks avail'd.
He had to deal with judgments keen,
That through his flimsy fraud had seen.
His aim the base impostor miss'd:
With double rage, the war was press'd;
Till false Prince Leopard, in the strife,
Was robb'd at once of crown and life.
Monarchs! to men sincere and just
The guidance of affairs entrust.
Forget not statesmen rather need
A virtuous heart than subtle head.
Though talents have their value too—
A value to be held in view.
Materials they, and needful tools,
Of noble use when virtue rules;
And when to such a track confin'd,
As she in wisdom has design'd;
Apart from her, their only use
Is general ruin to produce.

THE SQUIRREL AND THE LION.

A SQUIRREL, merrily leaping on the branches of an oak-tree, accidentally missed its hold and fell upon a lion who lay at the trunk, basking in the shade. His majesty awoke in anger, and raising his shaggy mane, displayed his terrific teeth to the trembling squirrel, who, in the most abject manner begged forgiveness for the intrusion. "I grant you your life," said the lion; "but on condition that you tell me the reason why you little beings are always so lively and happy, while my time passes so irksomely."—"Yes, sire," replied the squirrel, "I will, in return for your mercy, comply with your request: but he who speaks the truth ought to stand higher than he who hears it; permit me, therefore, to ascend the tree." The lion consented to this: and when the squirrel was out of his reach, he thus addressed him: "You seek to know why I am always merry. Conscience gives me a joyous mind: and learn, sire, that the infallible recipe for happiness—a good conscience—you are in want of. You are day and night oppressed with the sting of iniquity, for the crimes and wanton cruelties you have committed. How many animals have you devoured, while I have been employed in carrying nuts to alleviate the distresses of my poor brethren! You hate, and I love! Believe me, there is great meaning and truth in these words, and often have I heard my father observe when young: 'Son, let your happiness be founded in virtue, and hilarity will be the constant inmate of your bosom.'"

THE TREASURE AND THE TWO MEN.

A MAN having neither credit nor resource, nor a single farthing in his possession, dreading to die of hunger, resolved to terminate his misery by hanging himself. With this intention, he proceeded to a ruinous house, carrying a cord with him. In attempting to fasten a nail to one of the old walls, it gave way, when, to his great surprise, he discovered a treasure. Our desperado gathered it up; and without waiting to count the whole, returned home with the gold, well pleased with his good fortune, leaving the halter behind. Soon after, the man to whom the treasure belonged, arrived; and, perceiving it gone: "What," said he, "have I lost my money, and do I still exist? I should make a point of hanging myself, if a rope were not so expensive." Observing at length that a halter had been left there, he immediately put an end to his trouble by suspending himself from it. The miser seemed as much consoled at having the halter provided for him free of expence, as the impoverished man had been by the discovery of the treasure.

It is rare, indeed, that the miser ends his days without sorrow; for the treasure that he conceals, and is so loth to part with, frequently falls into the hands of others. Such are the changes which Fortune delights to make in her capricious moods. It is a peculiar trait in this fickle goddess, that she adopts the most eccentric means of destroying the hopes of the covetous when at the highest pitch, and to shower her golden gifts on the wretched when least expected.

THE LIONESS AND THE FOX.

The lioness and the fox meeting, fell into discourse; and the conversation turning upon the breeding and fruitfulness of some living creatures above others, the fox could not forbear taking the opportunity of observing to the lioness that for her part she thought foxes were as happy in that respect as almost any other creature; for that they bred constantly once a year, if not oftener, and always had a good litter of cubs at every birth. "And yet," said she, "there are those who are never delivered of more than one at a time, and that perhaps not above once or twice in a whole life, who hold up their noses, and value themselves so much upon it, that they think all other creatures beneath them, and scarce worthy to be spoken to" The lioness, perceiving whom this reflection pointed at, was fired with resentment, and replied with vehemence: "What you have observed may be true, and that not without reason. You produce a great many at a litter, and often; but what are they? foxes. I indeed have but one at a time; but you should remember that this one is a lion."

Our productions, of whatsoever kind, are not to be esteemed so much for the quantity as the quality of them. It is not being employed much, but well, and to the purpose, which makes us useful to the age we live in, and celebrated by those which are to come. As it is a misfortune to the countries which are infested with them, for foxes and other vermin to multiply, so one cannot help throwing out a melancholy reflection, when one sees some particulars of the human kind increase so fast as they do. But the obvious meaning of this Fable, is the hint it gives us in relation to authors. These gentlemen should never attempt to raise themselves a reputation, by enumerating a catalogue of their productions; since there is more glory in having written one tolerable piece, than a thousand indifferent ones. Whoever has had the good fortune to please in one performance of this kind, should be very cautious how he ventures his reputation in a second.

THE APE AND THE MISER.

A miser once kept a monkey.—A miser keep a monkey!—that is scarcely credible,—but so it was:—for company costs money, and servants may thieve; therefore young Grimace was kept for pastime, and because he could not tell tales. One Sunday, the bell having chimed for church, where the miser would often go to pray for an increase of wealth, he forgot in his hurry to lock up his desk, where the ape had often heard him chinking his guineas. The ape, who was tired of being idle, no sooner saw the gold, than he suggested a pleasant pastime for himself: he took, alternately, a guinea and a half guinea, and continued to throw them out, till a mob was collected, who scrambled for his favours. In the mean time old Gripus returned from church, and seeing the crowd assembled before his house, exclaimed: "Alas! what misfortune is here!" But no sooner did he perceive the business the ape was engaged in, than he vociferated: "You villain, you shall pay for this with your blood!" he was then silent from excess of passion. An old man standing by, made this remark: "Sir, moderate your anger:—the money is of no more service to you, than to the monkey! he throws it away, and you hoard it up! Which, pray, does the most good with it?"



THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

A VIPER chanced his head to pop
Into a fam'd watchmaker's shop;
Long near the place had he been lurking,
And staid till past the hours of working.
As with keen eyes he glanced around
In search of food, a file he found:
Of meats he saw no single item,
Which tempted hungry jaws to bite 'em,
So with his fangs the eager fool
Attacked the rough impassive tool;
And whilst his wounded palate bled,
Fancied on foreign gore he fed.
When thus the file retorted coolly:—
"Viper! this work's ingenious, truly!
No more those idle efforts try;
Proof 'gainst assaults like your's am I.
On me you'd fracture ev'ry bone,
I feel the teeth of Time alone."

THE FARMER AND HIS SONS.

A WEALTHY old farmer, who had for some time declined in health, perceiving that he had not many days to live, called his sons together to his bedside. "My dear children," said the dying man, "I leave it with you as my last injunction, not to part with the farm which has been in our family these hundred years! for, to disclose to you a secret which I received from my father, and which I now think proper to communicate to you, there is a treasure hid somewhere in the grounds, though I never could discover the particular spot where it lies concealed. However, as soon as the harvest is got in, spare no pains in the search, and I am well assured you will not lose your labour." The wise old man was no sooner laid in his grave, and the time he mentioned arrived, than his sons went to work, and with great vigour and alacrity turned up again and again every foot of ground belonging to their farm; the consequence of which was, although they did not find the object of their pursuit, that their lands yielded a far more plentiful crop than those of their neighbours. At the end of the year, when they were settling their accounts, and computing their extraordinary profits, "I would venture a wager," said one of the brothers more acute than the rest, "that this was the concealed wealth my father meant. I am sure, at least, we have found by experience—'that industry is itself a treasure.'"

THE FOWLER AND THE LARK.

A FOWLER set snares to catch larks in the open field. A lark was caught, and finding herself entangled, could not forbear lamenting her hard fate. "Ah! woe is me," said she, "what crime have I committed? I have taken neither silver nor gold, nor anything of value; but must die for eating a poor grain of wheat!"

THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE.

A TALL, straight fir-tree, that stood towering up in the midst of the forest, was so proud of his dignity and high station, that he overlooked the little shrubs which grew beneath him. A bramble, being one of the inferior throng, could by no means brook this haughty carriage, and therefore took him to task, and desired to know what he meant by it. "Because," said the fir-tree, "I look upon myself as the first tree for beauty and rank of any in the forest; my top shoots up to the clouds, and my branches display themselves with a perpetual beauty and verdure; while you lay grovelling upon the ground, liable to be crushed by every foot that comes near you, and impoverished by the luxurious drippings which fall from my leaves."—"All this may be true," replied the bramble, "but when the woodman has marked you out for public use, and the sounding axe comes to be applied to your root, I am mistaken if you would not be glad to change conditions with the very worst of us."

If the great were to reckon upon the mischiefs to which they are exposed, and poor private men consider the dangers which they many times escape, purely by being so, notwithstanding the seeming difference there appears to be between them, it would be no such easy matter as most people think it, to determine which condition is the more preferable. A reasonable man would declare in favour of the latter without the least hesitation, as knowing upon what a steady and safe security it is established. For the higher a man is exalted, the fairer mark he gives, and the more unlikely he is to escape a storm. What little foundation, therefore, has the greatest favourite of Fortune to behave himself with insolence to those below him; whose circumstances, though he is so elated with pride as to despise them, are, in the eye of every prudent man, more eligible than his own, and such as he himself when the day of reckoning comes, will wish he had never exceeded. For, as the riches which many overgrown great ones call the goods of Fortune, are seldom any other than the goods of the public, which they have impudently and feloniously taken, so public justice generally overtakes them in the end, and whatever their life may have been, their death is as ignominious and unpitied, as that of the meanest and most obscure thief.

THE TORTOISE AND THE TWO DUCKS.

VANITY and idle curiosity are qualities which generally prove destructive to those who suffer themselves to be governed by them.

A tortoise, weary of passing her days in the same obscure corner, conceived a wonderful inclination to visit foreign countries. Two ducks, whom the simple tortoise acquainted with her intention, undertook to oblige her upon the occasion. Accordingly they told her, that if she would fasten her mouth to the middle of a pole, they would take the two ends, and transport her whithersoever she chose to be conveyed. The tortoise approved of the expedient; and everything being prepared, the ducks began their flight with her. They had not travelled far in the air, when they were met by a crow, who enquiring what they were bearing along, they replied, "The queen of the tortoises." The tortoise, vain of the new and unmerited appellation, was going to confirm the title; when opening her mouth for that purpose, she let go her hold, and was dashed to pieces by her fall.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SNAIL.

All upstarts insolent in place
Remind us of their vulgar race.
As, in the sunshine of the morn,
A butterfly but newly born
Sat proudly perking on a rose,
With pert conceit his bosom glows;
His wings, all glorious to behold,
Bedropt with azure, jet and gold,
Wide he displays; the spangled dew
Reflects his eyes, and various hue.
His now-forgotten friend, a snail,
Beneath his house, with slimy trail,
Crawls o'er the grass; whom when he spies
In wrath he to the gard'ner cries:
"What means yon peasant's daily toil,
From choking weeds to rid the soil?
Why wake you to the morning's care?
Why with new arts correct the year?
Why glows the peach with crimson hue?
And why the plum's inviting blue?
Were they to feast his taste designed,
That vermin of voracious kind?
Crush then the slow, the pilfering race;
So purge thy garden from disgrace."—
"What arrogance!" the snail replied:
"How insolent is upstart pride!
Hadst thou not thus, with insult vain,
Provoked my patience to complain,
I had concealed thy meaner birth,
Nor traced thee to the scum of earth.
For scarce nine suns have waked the hours,
To swell the fruit and paint the flowers,
Since I thy humbler life surveyed,
In base and sordid guise arrayed;
A hideous insect, vile, unclean,
You dragged a slow and noisome train,
And from your spider-bowels drew
Foul film and spun the dirty clue.
I own my humble life, good friend;
Snail was I born, and snail shall end.
And what's a butterfly? At best
He's but a caterpillar drest;
And all thy race (a num'rous seed)
Shall prove of caterpillar breed."

THE BEE AND THE SPIDER.

The bee and the spider once entered into a warm debate which was the better artist. The spider urged her skill in the mathematics; and asserted that no one was half so well acquainted as herself with the construction of lines, angles, squares, and circles; that the web she daily wove was a specimen of art inimitable by any other creature in the universe; and besides, that her works were derived from herself alone, the product of her own bowels; whereas the boasted honey of the bee was stolen from every herb and flower of the field; nay, she had obligations even to the meanest weeds. To this the bee replied, that she was in hopes the art of extracting honey from the meanest weeds would at least have been allowed her as an excellence; and that as to her stealing sweets from the herbs and flowers of the field, her skill was there so conspicuous, that no flower ever suffered the least diminution of its fragrance from so delicate an operation. Then, as to the spider's vaunted knowledge in the construction of lines and angles, she believed she might safely rest the merits of her cause on the regularity alone of her combs; but since she could add to this, the sweetness and excellence of her honey, and the various purposes to which her wax was employed, she had nothing to fear from a comparison of her skill with that of the weaver of a flimsy cobweb; "for the value of every art," she observed, "is chiefly to be estimated by its use."

THE FOX AND THE SICK LION.

It was reported that the lion was sick, and the beasts were given to understand that they could not make their court better than by going to visit him. Upon this they generally went, but it was particularly taken notice of that the fox was not one of the number. The lion therefore despatched one of his jackals to sound him about it, and ask him why he had so little charity and respect as never to come near him at a time when he lay so dangerously ill, and everybody else had been to see him. "Why," replied the fox, "pray present my duty to his majesty, and tell him, that I have the same respect for him as ever, and I have been coming several times to kiss his royal hand; but I am so terribly frightened at the mouth of his cave, to see the print of my fellow-subjects' feet all pointing forwards and none backwards, that I have not resolution enough to venture in." Now the truth of the matter was, that this sickness of the lion's was only a sham to draw the beasts into his den, the more easily to devour them.

A man should weigh and consider the nature of any proposal well before he gives in to it. for a rash and hasty compliance has been the ruin of many a one. It is the quintessence of prudence not to be too easy of belief. Indeed, the multitude think altogether in the same track, and are much upon a footing. Their meditations are confined in one channel, and they follow one another very orderly in a regular stupidity. Vulgar notions are so generally attended with error, that wherever one traces the footsteps of the many tending all one way, it is enough to make one suspect, with the fox, that there is some trick in it. He that goes implicitly into a thing may be mistaken, notwithstanding the number of those who keep him company; but he that keeps out till he sees reason to enter, acts upon the true maxims of policy and prudence. In short, it becomes us, as we are reasonable creatures, to behave ourselves as such, and to do as few things as possible of which we may have occasion to repent

THE SPANIEL AND THE CAMELEON.

A SPANIEL, bred with all the care
That waits upon a favourite heir,
Ne'er felt correction's rigid hand:
Indulged to disobey command,
In pampered ease his hours were spent;
He never knew what learning meant.
Such forward airs, so pert, so smart,
Were sure to win his lady's heart:
Each little mischief gain'd him praise;
How pretty were his fawning ways!
The wind was south, the morning fair,
He ventures forth to take the air:
He ranges all the meadow round,
And rolls upon the softest ground;
When near him a cameleon seen
Was scarce distinguished from the green.
"Dear emblem of the flattering host,
What, live with clowns? a genius lost!
To cities and the court repair,
A fortune cannot fail thee there;
Preferment shall thy talents crown:
Believe me friend; I know the town."—
"Sir," says the sycophant, "like you,
Of old, politer life I knew:
Like you a courtier born and bred,
Kings lean'd an ear to what I said.
My whisper always met success;
The ladies praised me for address.
I knew to hit each courtier's passion,
And flatter'd every vice in fashion.
But Jove, who hates the liar's ways,
At once cut short my prosp'rous days;
And, sentenc'd to retain my nature,
Transformed me to this crawling creature.
Doom'd to a life obscure and mean,
I wander in the sylvan scene.
For Jove the heart alone regards;
He punishes what man rewards.
How diff'rent is thy case and mine!
With men at least you sup and dine;
While I, condemned to thinnest fare,
Like those I flattered, feed on air."

THE CAT AND THE MICE.

A CERTAIN house was much infested with mice; but at last they got a cat, who caught and ate some of them every day. The mice, finding their numbers thinning, consulted what was best to be done for the preservation of the public from the jaws of the devouring cat. They debated, and came to this resolution, that no one should go down below the upper shelf. The cat, observing the mice no longer came down as usual, hungry and disappointed of her prey, had recourse to this stratagem; she hung by her hinder legs on a peg which stuck in the wall, and made as if she had been dead, hoping by this lure to entice the mice to come down. She had not been in this posture long, before a cunning old mouse peeped over the edge of the shelf, and spoke thus: "Aha! my good friend, are you there? there may you be! I would not trust myself with you, though your skin were stuffed with straw."

Prudent folks never trust those a second time who have deceived them once. And indeed we cannot well be too cautious in following this rule; for upon examination, we shall find, that most of the misfortunes which befal us, proceed from too great credulity. They that know how to suspect, without exposing or hurting themselves, till honesty comes to be more in fashion, can never suspect too much.

THE ROYAL APE.

ONCE upon a time, the beasts were so void of reason, as to choose an ape for their king. He had danced and diverted them with playing antic tricks, and truly nothing would serve, but they must anoint him their sovereign. Accordingly crowned he was, and affected to look very wise and politic. But the fox, vexed at his heart to see his fellow brutes act so foolishly, was resolved on the first opportunity, to convince them of their sorry choice, and punish their jackanapes of a king for his presumption. Soon after, spying a trap in a ditch, which was baited with a piece of flesh, he went and informed the ape of it, as a treasure, which, being found upon the waste, belonged to his majesty only. The ape, dreaming nothing of the matter, went very briskly to take possession; but had no sooner laid his paws upon the bait, than he was caught in the trap, where, betwixt shame and anger, he began to reproach the fox, calling him rebel and traitor, and threatening to be revenged of him; at all which Renard laughed heartily, and going off, added with a sneer, "You a king, and not understand trap!"

A weak man should not aspire to be a king, for in the end it would prove as inconvenient to himself, as disadvantageous to the public. To be qualified for such an office, an office of the last importance to mankind, the person should be of distinguished prudence, and most unblemished integrity; too honest to impose upon others, and too penetrating to be imposed upon; thoroughly acquainted with the laws and genius of the realm he is to govern; brave, but not passionate; good-natured, but not soft; aspiring at just esteem; despising vain-glory; without superstition; without hypocrisy. When thrones have been filled by people of a different turn from this, histories shew what a wretched figure they always made; what tools they were to particular persons, and what plagues to their subjects in general. They who studied their passions, and entered into their foibles, led them by the nose as they pleased; and took them off from the guardianship of the public by some paltry amusement, that themselves might have the better opportunity to rifle and plunder it.

THE LION, THE BEAR, THE MONKEY, AND THE FOX.

THE tyrant of the forest issued a proclamation, commanding all his subjects to repair immediately to his royal den. Among the rest the bear made his appearance: but pretending to be offended with the steams which issued from the monarch's apartments, he was imprudent enough to hold his nose in his majesty's presence. This insolence was so highly resented that the lion in a rage laid him dead at his feet. The monkey, observing what had passed, trembled for his carcase; and attempted to conciliate favour by the most abject flattery. He began with protesting, that, for his part, he thought the apartments were perfumed with Arabian spices; and exclaiming against the rudeness of the bear, admired the beauty of his majesty's paws, so happily formed, he said, to correct the insolence of clowns. This fulsome adulation, instead of being received as he expected, proved no less offensive than the rudeness of the bear: and the courtly monkey was in like manner extended by the side of Sir Bruin. And now his majesty cast his eye upon the fox. "Well Renard," said he, "and what scent do you discover here?"—"Great prince," replied the cautious fox, "my nose was never esteemed my most distinguishing sense: and at present I would by no means venture to give my opinion, as I have unfortunately got a terrible cold."

THE BIRDS, THE BEASTS, AND THE BAT.

THERE once commenced a fierce war between the birds and the beasts, when the bat, taking advantage of his ambiguous make, hoped by that means to live secure in a state of neutrality, and save his bacon. It was not long before the forces on each side met, and gave battle; and their animosities running very high, a dreadful slaughter ensued. The bat, at the beginning of the day, thinking the birds most likely to carry it, listed himself among them, but kept fluttering at a little distance, that he might the better observe and take his measures accordingly. However, after some time spent in action, the army of the beasts seeming to prevail, he went entirely over to them, and endeavoured to convince them, by the affinity which he had to a mouse, that he was by nature a beast, and would always continue firm and true to their interest. His plea was admitted; but, in the end, the advantage turning completely on the side of the birds, under the admirable conduct and courage of their general, the eagle, the bat, to save his life, and escape the disgrace of falling into the hands of his deserted friends, betook himself to flight; and ever since, skulking in caves and hollow trees all day, as if ashamed to shew himself, he never appears till the dusk of the evening, when all the feathered inhabitants of the air are gone to roost.

For any one to desert the interest of his country, and turn renegado, either from fear, or any prospect of advantage, is so notoriously vile and low, that it is no wonder if the man who is detected in it, is for ever ashamed to see the sun, and to shew himself in the eyes of those whose cause he has betrayed.

THE PINE-APPLES.

A young Cacique, who from Peru
To Europe came, would all things view.
This youth had taste and observation,
Not turn'd to plans of legislation,
But to the produce, soil, and air—
The objects these of savage care,
Far more than guiding realms, by rules
Deriv'd from statesmen's crafty schools.
In England once he went to view
A noble villa, thatch'd by few:
The gard'ner there a greenhouse shews,
Where, with delight, in golden rows,
The Indian sees pine-apples shoot—
His native land's delicious fruit,
Which Europe's toil, for luxury's wants,
That urge each bold attempt, transplants,
He opens one—he smells—he eats,
But cries, "Its form my palate cheats:
Our apples here no flavour boast,
And are not worth the price they cost.
Doubtless, in every clime we see
Its own peculiar energy;
The fruit of which, in other soils,
Who tries to mimic, only spoils,
When I my native land regain,
This truth should in my thoughts remain;
That fruits, which here spontaneous grow,
There to the dunghill we may throw."
The Indian surely reason'd right,
And spoke a truth of urgent weight.
In laws, in manners, as in trees,
Transplant alone what comes with ease.

THE FOX AND THE LION.

The first time the fox saw the lion, he fell down at his feet, and was ready to die with fear. The second time he took courage, and could even bear to look upon him. The third time he had the impudence to come up to him, salute, and enter into familiar conversation with him.

Here we may observe the two extremes in which we may fall as to a proper behaviour towards our superiors. The one is a bashfulness, proceeding either from a vicious, guilty mind, or a timorous rusticity; the other, an overbearing impudence, which assumes more than becomes it, and so renders the person insufferable to the conversation of well bred, reasonable people.



THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

Ye men of genius-gifted brains,
Who scoff at tardy wits as muddy,
That gain their point by toil and pains—
You deem mispent the hours severe of study;
More pleas'd with feasting, frolicking, or nodding;
Learn from this tale the potency of plodding.

A tortoise, nothing swift, but somewhat cunning,
Said to a brisk, young, thoughtless hare,
"Friend, if you wish to shew your skill in running,
I will against your speed a trial dare.
A verdant parsley-wreath shall grace the winner,
To wear—or else to make a savoury dinner."

"You run with me!" said wond'ring Puss,
Have you these megrims, gossip, had before?
Till now I never saw you thus—
Pray take to-night some grains of hellebore."
"My brains are sound as yours:" the tortoise cried;
And so at once the experiment was tried.

The garland at the goal was laid:
The hare, in half a dozen bounds
(Such as she makes when much afraid,
And throws at distance e'en the fleetest hounds)
Could reach the promis'd prize with ease and pleasure,
She thinks her fame demands to start at leisure.

She takes a nap;—then idly grazes,
Frisks round, and listens to the wind;
Doubles thro' all her wanton mazes,
Nor seems the contest once to bear in mind.
Letting the tortoise creep her solemn pace,
At the last moment means to win the race.

"Ah!" thought the tortoise, "you'll repent ye:
These foolish freaks too late you'll rue.
My motto still, *festina lentè*,
My course thus steadily I'll still pursue."
Now starts the hare, and like an arrow flies—
The tortoise had already touch'd the prize!

THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

An owl sat sleeping in a tree, when a grasshopper, who was singing beneath, would not let her be quiet, abusing her with very indecent and uncivil language, telling her she was a scandalous person, who plied at nights to get her living, and shut herself up all day in a hollow tree. The owl desired her to hold her tongue and be quiet, notwithstanding which she was still impertinent. She begged of her a second time to leave off, but to no purpose. The owl, vexed at heart to find that all she said went for nothing, cast about to inveigle her by stratagem. "Well," said she, "since one must needs be kept awake, it is a pleasure, however, to be so by such an agreeable voice, which, I must confess, is in no way inferior to the finest harp. And now I think of it, I have a bottle of excellent nectar, which my mistress Pallas gave me; if you have a mind, I will give you a dram to whet your whistle." The grasshopper, ready to die with thirst, and at the same time pleased to be so complimented upon account of her voice, skipped up to the place very briskly; when the owl, advancing to meet her, seized, and, without much delay, made her a sacrifice to her revenge; securing to herself, by the death of her enemy, possession of that quiet, which, during her life-time she could not enjoy.

Humanity, or what we understand by common civility, is not a more necessary duty than it is easy to practise. The man that is guilty of ill-manners, must do violence to himself, as well as to the person he offends; and cannot be inhuman to others, without being cruel to his own nature. Some young people are fond of shewing their wit and intrepidity, and, therefore, take occasion to do it when a friend is peevish, (as one may have a private cause for being so,) and will not leave till they have rallied him out of it, though he entreat them ever so gravely and earnestly. Whereas, in truth, we have no right to be impertinent with one another; and, though there is no law to punish such incivility, it will scarce fail of meeting with deserved and just chastisement some way or other.

THE WOLVES AND THE SICK ASS.

An ass being sick, the report of it was spread abroad in the country, and some said that she would die before another night passed over her head. Upon this, several wolves came to the stable where she lay, under pretence of making her a visit; but, rapping at the door, and asking how she did, the young ass came out and told them that his mother was much better than they desired.

The charitable visits which are made to many sick people proceed from much the same motive with that which prevailed upon the wolves to pay their duty to the sick ass, namely, that they may come in for some of their remains, and feast themselves upon the reversion of their goods and chattels. As a behaviour thus grossly impertinent and officious, must needs be offensive to a discerning man, and more especially at such a time, when he labours under any indisposition or pain of body, so it is very frequently injurious to the interest of him who makes use of it, and proves to be the means of his missing such an inheritance or legacy, as a more distant and modest deportment might have secured to him.

THE YOUNG LADY AND THE LOOKING-GLASS.

Ye deep philosophers, who can
Explain that various creature, man,
Say, is there any point so nice
As that of offering advice?
To bid your friend his errors mend,
Is almost certain to offend:
Tho' you in softest terms advise,
Confess him good, admit him wise;
In vain you sweeten the discourse,
He thinks you call him fool, or worse;
You paint his character, and try
If he will own it, and apply;
Without a name reprove and warn;
Here none are hurt, and all may learn;
This too must fail; the picture shewn,
No man will take it for his own,
In moral lectures treat the case,
Say this is honest, that is base;
In conversation none will bear it;
And for the pulpit, few come near it
And is there then no other way
A moral lesson to convey?
Must all that shall attempt to teach,
Admonish, satirize, or preach?
Yes, there is one, an ancient art,
By sages found to reach the heart,
Ere science with distinctions nice.
Had fixed what virtue is, and vice,
No will she minded but her own:
Inventing all the various names
On which the moralist declaims:
They would by simple tales advise,
Which took the hearer by surprise;
Alarmed his conscience unprepared,
Ere pride had put it on its guard;
And made him from himself receive
The lessons which they meant to give.
That this device will oft prevail,
And gain its end when others fail,
If any shall pretend to doubt,
The tale which follows makes it out.

There was a little stubborn dame,
Whom no authority could tame;

Restive by long indulgence grown,
No will she minded but her own :
At trifles oft she'd scold and fret,
Then in a corner take a seat,
And, sourly moping all the day,
Disdain alike to work or play.
Papa all softer arts had tried,
And sharper remedies applied ;
But both were vain ; for ev'ry course
He took, still made her worse and worse.
'Tis strange to think how female wit
So oft should make a lucky hit ;
When man with all his high pretence
To deeper judgment, sounder sense,
Will err, and measures false pursue—
'Tis very strange, I own, but true.—
Mamma observed the rising lass,
By stealth retiring to the glass,
To practise little airs unseen,
In the true genius of thirteen -
On this a deep design she laid
To tame the humour of the maid ;
Contriving like a prudent mother,
To make one folly cure another.
Upon the wall, against the seat
Which Jessy used for her retreat,
Whene'er by accident offended,
A looking-glass was straight suspended,
That it might shew her how deformed,
She looked, and frightful when she stormed ;
And warn her as she prized her beauty,
To bend her humour to her duty.
All this the looking-glass achieved ;
Its threats were minded and believed.
The maid who spurned at all advice,
Grew tame and gentle in a trice :
So, when all other means had failed,
The silent monitor prevailed.
Thus, Fable to the human kind
Presents an image of the mind :
It is a mirror, where we spy
At large our own deformity ;
And learn of course those faults to mend
Which but to mention would offend.



THE CAT, THE COCK, AND THE YOUNG MOUSE

THE CAT, THE COCK AND THE YOUNG MOUSE.

A YOUNG mouse, who had seen very little of the world, came running one day to his mother in great haste—"O mother," said he, "I am frightened almost to death! I have seen a most extraordinary creature. He has a fierce angry look, and struts about upon two legs. A strange piece of flesh grows on his head, and another under his throat, as red as blood. He flapped his arms against his sides, as if he intended to rise into the air; and stretching out his head, he opened a sharp pointed mouth so wide, that I thought he was preparing to swallow me up: then he roared at me so horribly, that I trembled in every joint, and was glad to run home as fast as I could. If I had not been frightened away by this terrible monster I was just going to commence an acquaintance with the prettiest creature you ever saw. She had a soft fur skin thicker than ours; and all beautifully streaked with black and grey; with a modest look, and a demeanour so humble and courteous, that methought I could have fallen in love with her. Then she had a fine long tail, which she waved about so prettily, and looked so earnestly at me, that I do believe she was just going to speak to me, when the horrid monster frightened me away."—"Ah! my dear child," said the mother, "you have escaped being devoured, but not by that monster you were so much afraid of: which in truth was only a bird, and would have done you no manner of harm. Whereas, the sweet creature, of whom you seem so fond, was no other than a cat; who, under that hypocritical countenance, conceals the most inveterate hatred to all our race, and subsists entirely by devouring mice. Learn from this incident, my dear, never while you live to rely on outward appearances.

THE CAT AND THE SPANIEL.

TOM PUSS was a mischievous animal, and always took pleasure in bringing honest Smiler into trouble. If the victuals were brought on table, Tom would, if an opportunity occurred, seize a part of it, drop a morsel by the side of Smiler, and make his escape. When the servants returned, finding a piece beside the dog, they directly concluded he was the thief, and thrashed him soundly. When Tom and the spaniel were alone in a room, the former would knock down a plate, a glass, or anything that would break, and then set off, whence Smiler was chastised as the transgressor. The poor dog bore these evils patiently, trusting that one day his innocence would be known. It happened one afternoon that the poor dog was lying in the sun, near the hen-coop, by the side of which a trap was set, to catch a marten, who the day before had carried off a brace of fowls. A dead chicken was placed in the trap as a bait. Tom, who was always engaged in mischief, thought this a favourable opportunity to involve Smiler in trouble. "I will take the chicken away," said he, "which will make me a good repast, and Smiler's back will pay for it." Then, sliding softly down, to effect his purpose, and putting his claws in to seize the prize, the trap closed upon him, and he fell a martyr to his love of mischief. His expiring cries brought all the family out, and it was now believed that he had been the cause of all poor Smiler's troubles. Indeed, as it was afterwards found that no more thefts occurred, Smiler was taken into favour, and rewarded as much now, as he had been ill-treated before.

THE LION AND OTHER BEASTS HUNTING.

A LEOPARD, a lynx, and a wolf, were ambitious of the honour of hunting with the lion. His savage majesty graciously acceded to their desire, and it was agreed that they should all have an equal share in whatever might be taken. They scour the forest; are unanimous in the pursuit, and, after a very fine chace, pull down a noble stag. It was divided with great dexterity by the lynx into four equal parts, but just as he was going to secure his share—"Hold," said the lion, "let no one presume to serve himself, till he hath heard our just and reasonable claims. I seize upon the first quarter by virtue of my prerogative; the second I think is due to my superior conduct and courage; I cannot forego the third on account of the necessities of my den; and if any one is inclined to dispute my right to the fourth, let him speak." Awed by the majesty of his frown, and the terror of his paws, they silently withdrew, resolving never to hunt again, but with their equal.

THE ASS AND THE LAP-DOG.

An ass who lived in the same house with a favourite lap-dog, observing the superior degree of affection which the little minion enjoyed, imagined he had nothing more to do, in order to obtain an equal share in the good graces of the family, than to imitate the lap-dog's playful and endearing caresses. Accordingly he began to frisk about his master, kicking up his heels, and braying in an awkward affectation of wantonness and pleasantry. This strange behaviour could not fail of raising much laughter; which the ass mistaking for approbation and encouragement, he proceeded to leap upon his master's breast, and began very familiarly to lick his face; but he was presently convinced, by the force of a good cudgel, that what is sprightly and agreeable in one, may in another be justly censured as rude and impertinent; and that the surest way to gain esteem, is for every one to act suitably to his own natural genius and character.

THE FARMER AND HIS DOG.

A FARMER who had just stepped into the field to mend a gap in one of his fences, found at his return the cradle, where he had left his only child asleep, turned upside down, the clothes all torn and bloody, and his dog lying near it besmeared also with blood. Immediately conceiving that the creature had destroyed his child, he instantly dashed out his brains with a hatchet in his hand, when turning up the cradle, he found his child unhurt, and an enormous serpent lying dead on the floor, killed by that faithful dog, whose courage and fidelity in preserving the life of his son, deserved another kind of reward. These affecting circumstances afforded him a striking lesson, how dangerous it is too hastily to give way to the blind impulse of a sudden passion.

THE FARMER, THE SPANIEL, AND THE CAT.

Why knits my dear her angry brow?
What rude offence alarms you now?
I said that Delia's fair, 'tis true,
But did I say she equalled you?
Can't I another's face commend,
Or to her virtues be a friend,
But instantly your forehead lours,
As if her merit lessen'd yours?
From female envy never free,
All must be blind because you see.
  Survey the gardens, fields and bow'rs,
The buds, the blossoms, and the flow'rs:
Then tell me where the woodbine grows
That vies in sweetness with the rose;
Or where the lily's snowy white,
That throws such beauties on the sight?
Yet folly is it to declare,
That these are neither sweet nor fair.
The crystal shines with fainter rays
Before the diamond's brighter blaze;
And fops will say the diamond dies
Before the lustre of your eyes:
But I, who deal in truth, deny
That neither shine when you are by.
  When zephyrs o'er the blossom stray,
And sweets along the air convey,
Shan't I the fragrant breeze inhale,
Because you breathe a sweeter gale?
  Sweet are the flow'rs that deck the field;
Sweet is the smell the blossoms yield;
Sweet is the summer gale that blows;
And sweet, tho' sweeter you, the rose.
  Shall envy then torment your breast,
If you are lovelier than the rest?
For while I give to each her due,
By praising them I flatter you;
And praising most, I still declare
You fairest, where the rest are fair.
  As at his board a farmer sate,
Replenish'd by his homely treat,
His fav'rite spaniel near him stood,
And with his master shar'd the food;
The crackling bones his jaws devour'd
His lapping tongue the trenchers scour'd;

Till, sated now, supine he lay,
And snor'd the rising fumes away.
The hungry cat in turn drew near,
And humbly crav'd a servant's share;
Her modest worth the master knew,
And straight the fatt'ning morsel threw:
Enrag'd the snarling cur awoke,
And thus with spiteful envy spoke:
"They only claim a right to eat,
Who earn by services their meat;
Me, zeal and industry inflame
To scour the fields, and spring the game;
Or, plunged in the wint'ry wave,
For man the wounded bird to save,
With watchful diligence I keep
From prowling wolves his fleecy sheep;
At home his midnight hours secure,
And drive the robber from the door:
For this his breast with kindness glows,
For this his hand the food bestows;
And shall thy indolence impart
A warmer friendship to his heart,
That thus he robs me of my due,
To pamper such vile things as you?"—
"I own," with meekness Puss replied,
"Superior merit on your side;
Nor does my breast with envy swell,
To find it recompens'd so well;
Yet I, in what my nature can,
Contribute to the good of man.
Whose claws destroy the pilf'ring mouse?
Who drives the vermin from the house?
Or, watchful for the lab'ring swain,
From lurking rats secures the grain?
From hence if he rewards bestow,
Why should your heart with gall o'erflow?
Why pine my happiness to see,
Since there's enough for you and me?"—
"Thy words are just," the farmer cried,
And spurn'd the snarler from his side.

THE LARK AND THE CUCKOO.

A LARK said to a cuckoo, "Whence is it, that the storks, who are greater travellers, are not more knowing than we are?" The cuckoo smiled, and replied: "It is to point out to us, that he who sets out on his travels without understanding, will never find it by the way."



THE DOG THAT CARRIED HIS MASTER'S DINNER.

THE DOG THAT CARRIED HIS MASTER'S DINNER.

Our eyes are not proof against beauty, nor our hands against gold: few persons can guard a treasure faithfully.

A certain dog was commissioned to carry his master's dinner, which was hung in a basket round his neck. He was temperate; more so, indeed, than he desired, when he had anything delicate under his nose: we are all tempted when we have charge of wealth. Strange! that a dog should be taught to moderate his appetite, when human beings never can! Our dog, then, being thus employed, a mastiff approached, and wished to rob him of the dinner; but he was not fated to enjoy it so much as he expected; for, the dog putting down his burden, in order to defend it better, a pitched battle took place. Other dogs soon ran to see the fight; they were of that class which lives on the public, and cared little for blows. Our dog finding himself too feeble to resist them all, and perceiving his convoy in manifest danger, determined to have his portion, and wisely said to them: "No more blows, gentlemen; I am content with my share of the dinner, make the most of the rest." Without further ceremony, one snatched at a morsel, and was succeeded by the mastiff, and the whole mob, who each devoured whatever he could come at; every one had a finger in the pie, and soon disposed of the banquet.

THE BEE AND THE ANT.

A bee was busily employed about a meadow on a fine summer's day, seeking honey, and providing for her house. She visited alternately every flower, loading her little thighs with yellow wax, to construct her cells and store-rooms; or extracting the fine farina from the cups of the marigold and the tulip. During her employment, she observed an ant, who, being as provident as herself, thus addressed her: "I am an admirer of your industrious pursuits, and am myself as busily engaged as you. With unremitting care I build my caves, and form passages which seem beyond my strength. I provide carefully for my young, and travel with them night and day. For them I erect granaries and habitations, to provide them with plenty, and secure them from heat and cold; notwithstanding which, I am invariably persecuted by man. If by chance we get into their houses or magazines, a general outcry is raised against us, and we are persecuted to destruction. In gardens and meadows they overwhelm our cities, and destroy our young in their egg. Often are the trees besmeared with I know not what, to prevent our climbing up to fetch our hard-earned food."—"And are you surprised at this?" observed the bee; "pray do not compare your labours with mine: your toil is not confined to that which Nature has given in common to all, but you attack the hoards which others have collected with pains and hazard. Even mine is the object of your incursions, and you destroy as fast as you collect, regardless of the losses others sustain, when you undermine gardens and meadows. I, on the contrary, gather my treasures from blossoms and flowers, and neither rob them of their beauty nor fine scent. Moreover, you do not share your plunder with any one, while I collect my store more for the benefit of others than myself; my wax and honey are invaluable to man; the reason, therefore, is plain, why he protects me and persecutes you."

•THE OLD WOMAN AND THE EMPTY CASK.

An old woman saw an empty cask lying, from which there had been lately drawn a piece of choice racy palm sack; the spirit of which yet hung about the vessel, and the very lees yielded a grateful cordial scent. She applied her nose to the bung-hole, and, snuffing very heartily for some time, at last broke out into this exclamation:—"Oh! the delicious smell; how good, how charming must you have been once, when your very dregs are so agreeable and refreshing?"

THE JUDICIOUS LION.

A lion having taken a young bullock, stood over, and was just going to devour it, when a thief stept in, and cried halves with him. "No, friend," said the lion, "you are too apt to take what is not your due, and, therefore, I shall have nothing to say to you." By chance a poor honest traveller happened to come that way, and, seeing the lion, modestly and timorously withdrew, intending to go another way; upon which, the generous beast, with a courteous, affable behaviour, desired him to come forward, and partake with him of that to which his modesty and humility had given him so good a title. Then dividing the prey into two equal parts, and feasting himself upon one of them, he retired into the woods, and left the place clear for the honest man to come in and take his share.

There is no one but will readily allow this behaviour of the lion to have been commendable and just; notwithstanding which, greediness and importunity often thrive and attain their ends, while modesty starves, and is for ever poor. Nothing is more disagreeable to quiet, reasonable men, than those that are petulant, forward, and craving, in soliciting for their favours: and yet favours are seldom bestowed but upon such as have extorted them by these teazing, offensive means. Every patron, when he speaks his real thoughts, is ready to acknowledge, that the modest man has the best title to his esteem; yet he suffers himself, too often, to be prevailed upon, merely by outrageous noise, to give that to a shameless, assuming fellow, which he knows to be justly due to the silent, unapplying, modest man. It would be a laudable thing for a man in power to make a resolution not to confer any advantageous post upon the person that asks for it, as it would free him from importunity, and afford him a quiet leisure, upon any vacancy, either to consider with himself who had deserved best of their country, or to enquire, and be informed by those whom he could trust. But as this is seldom or never practised, no wonder that we often find men of little merit advanced to considerable stations, who were incapable of being known to the public any other way.

THE HAWK AND THE FARMER.

A hawk pursuing a pigeon over a corn-field with great eagerness, was caught in a net, which a husbandman had planted there to take the crows; who, being employed not far off, and seeing the hawk fluttering in the snare, came and took him. But, just as he was going to kill him, the hawk besought him to let him go, assuring him that he was only following a pigeon, and neither intended nor had done him any harm. To whom the farmer replied: "And what harm had the poor pigeon done you?" Upon which he wrung his head off immediately.

THE FARMER, THE HORSEMAN, AND THE PEDESTRIAN.

A FARMER, on his ass astride,
Who peacefully pursued his ride,
Exclaim'd, when on a Spanish steed,
An horseman pass'd with lively speed,
"Ah ! charming seat ! what deed of mine
Should thus incense the powers divine,
Who doom me ne'er to shift my place,
But at an ass's tardy pace ?"
Thus speaking, with chagrin and spite,
He reach'd a rough and rocky height,
Up which a poor o'er-labour'd drudge,
On tottering feet, was forc'd to trudge ;
With forehead prone, and bending back
Press'd by a large and heavy pack.
The farmer cross'd the hill at ease ;
Jocosely set, with lolling knees,
On his poor ass, the rugged scene
Appear'd a soft and level green.
No flinty points his feet annoy'd :
He pass'd the panting walker's side,
Yet saw him not,—so wrapt his brain
With dreams of Andalusia's plain.
Such is the world—cur bosoms brood
With keen desire, o'er others' good :
On this we muse, and musing still,
We rarely dream of others' ill.
A further truth the tale unfolds :
Each, like the ass-born hind, beholds
The rich around, on steeds of Spain ;
And deems their rank exempt from pain.
But still let us our notice keep
On those who clamber up the steep ;
Then shall our grateful bosoms pour
Unceasing praise, and God adore.

THE WOLF AND THE APE.

A WOLF was ironically lamenting that the ape wanted a tail and a warm tight skin. "And is your skin really so handsome ?" said the ape. "I should really think," replied the other, "that its appearance would demonstrate that : but if you doubt, ask mankind, who will tell you what it is used for, and how valuable it is."—"Then I thank Heaven," replied the ape, "that it is denied to me ; for those advantages are destructive which excite our superiors to persecute us, and induce robberies which we cannot escape."

THE LIONESS AND THE MONKEY.

A LIONESS, with a terrific and thundering growl, was parading through the wood, lamenting the loss of her cub, which had been shot by a huntsman. The affrighted animals all ran away, except a few who ventured near from curiosity. Among these was a monkey, who seated himself on a high tree, and requested to know the cause of her sorrow, and if he could render her any assistance. The lioness replied, "You can be of no service to me! I have lost my darling, my only cub, and all I ask of you is to weep with me."

The monkey then, with a grin, tauntingly said: "I assist you to weep!—you, who have cruelly destroyed my family and offspring! Know that we must possess pity before we can entreat it of others. For this time, therefore, all I ask of you, is to bear with my scoffs and merriment."

THE HUMMING-BIRD AND THE TRAVELLER.

A TRAVELLER who had visited Asia, Africa, and Europe, was at length, in making his tour through America, overcome with heat, and lay to repose under a tree. He had scarcely began to doze, when he was roused by a loud noise, of which he could not discover the cause. Looking about him, he perceived a small bird issuing forth from the hollow of a tree, whose beautiful plumage was variegated like the rainbow, and whose bulk scarcely exceeded that of the cockchaffer. "Is it you, little insect, that makes this loud humming noise?" exclaimed the traveller. "Yes," replied the bird, "you need not be surprised at that, for with men, as well as animals, the least often makes the greatest noise."

THE TWO PEASANTS AND THE CLOUD.

Two peasants walking together, one of them remarked to the other, in a piteous tone, that he was sure yonder black cloud would be the harbinger of misfortune. "How so?" replied William, pleasantly. "How so?" retorted John: "I will wager that it is charged with hailstones; the harvest will be destroyed; not an ear of wheat will be left standing, and famine must ensue."—"What is the man dreaming of?" said William, good-humouredly; "I see nothing in that leaden cloud but an abundance of rain, which has been so long ardently prayed for. Instead of injury, the rain will enrich us, and ensure a plentiful year; let us, therefore, rejoice, and take a cup of ale upon the strength of it."—"How can you talk at this rate?" exclaimed John, angrily; to which William retorted: "Your eyes serve you but to little purpose." In this manner the quarrel proceeded to such a height, that they were about to proceed to blows; when a brisk wind arose, the cloud was dispersed, and both were deceived.

THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD.

A MONKEY, to reform the times,
Resolv'd to visit foreign climes:
For men in distant regions roam
To bring politer manners home.
So forth he fares, all toil defies;
Misfortune serves to make us wise.
At length the treach'rous snare was laid;
Poor Pug was caught, to town convey'd,
There sold. How envied was his doom,
Made captive in a lady's room!
Proud as a lover of his chains,
He day by day her favour gains.
Whene'er the duty of the day
The toilet calls, with mimic play
He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan,
Like any other gentleman.
In visits too his parts and wit,
When jests grew dull, were sure to hit.
Proud with applause, he thought his mind
In ev'ry courtly art refin'd;
Like Orpheus burnt with public zeal,
To civilize the monkey weal:
So watch'd occasion, broke his chain,
And sought his native woods again.
The hairy sylvans round him press,
Astonish'd at his strut and dress.
Some praise his sleeve; and others glote
Upon his rich embroider'd coat;
His dapper perriwig commending,
With the black tail behind depending;
His powder'd back, above, below,
Like hoary frost, or fleecy snow:
But all with envy and desire
His flutt'ring shoulder-knot admire.
"Hear and improve," he pertly cries;
"I come to make a nation wise.
Weigh your own worth, support your place,
The next in rank to human race.
In cities long I pass'd my days,
Convers'd with men, and learn'd their ways.
Their dress, their courtly manners see;
Reform your state, and copy me.
Seek ye to thrive! in flatt'ry deal;
Your scorn, your hate, with that conceal,

Seem only to regard your friends,
But use them for your private ends.
Stint not to truth the flow of wit;
Be prompt to lie whene'er 'tis fit.
Bend all your force to spatter merit:
Scandal is conversation's spirit.
Boldly to everything attend,
And men your talents shall commend.
I knew the great. Observe me right;
So shall you grow like man polite."
He spoke, and bow'd. With mutt'ring jaws
The wond'ring circle grinn'd applause.
Now warm with malice, envy, spite,
Their most obliging friends they bite;
And, fond to copy human ways,
Practise new mischiefs all their days.
Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
With travel finishes the fool;
Studious of every coxcomb's airs,
He drinks, games, dresses, lies, and swears;
O'erlooks with scorn all virtuous arts;
For vice is fitted to his parts.

THE CAT AND THE OLD RAT.

A CERTAIN cat had made such unmerciful havoc among the vermin of her neighbourhood, that not a single rat or mouse dared venture to appear abroad. Puss was soon convinced, that if affairs remained in their present situation, she must be totally unsupplied with provision. After mature deliberation, therefore, she resolved to have recourse to stratagem. For this purpose, she suspended herself from a hook with her head downward, pretending to be dead. The rats and mice observing her, as they peeped from their holes, in this dangling attitude, concluded she was hanged for some misdemeanour; and with great joy sallied forth in quest of their prey. Puss, as soon as a sufficient number were collected together, quitting her hold, dropped into the midst of them; and very few had the fortune to make good their retreat. This artifice having succeeded so well, she was encouraged to try the event of a second. Accordingly, she whitened her coat all over, by rolling herself in a heap of flour, and in this disguise lay concealed in the bottom of a meal-tub. This stratagem was executed in general with the same effect as the former. But an old experienced rat, altogether as cunning as his adversary, was not so easily ensnared. "I do not much like," said he "that white heap yonder; something whispers me, there is mischief concealed under it. 'Tis true, it may be meal; but it may likewise be something that I shall not relish quite so well. There can be no harm, at least, in keeping at a proper distance; for caution, I am sure, is the parent of security."

THE PATIENT SHEEP.

There was a sheep so charming from its innocent countenance, its fine fleecy coat, and its harmless pranks, that the son of the gentleman whose property it was, took it home for his amusement. Having played with it for a length of time, till he was tired, it was again returned to the flock. During its domestic confinement, it had endured many sufferings from the wildness of its young master; and now no longer dreaded shearing, or the other hardships incidental to the flock; for its early privations had taught it patience.

THE TWO BEES.

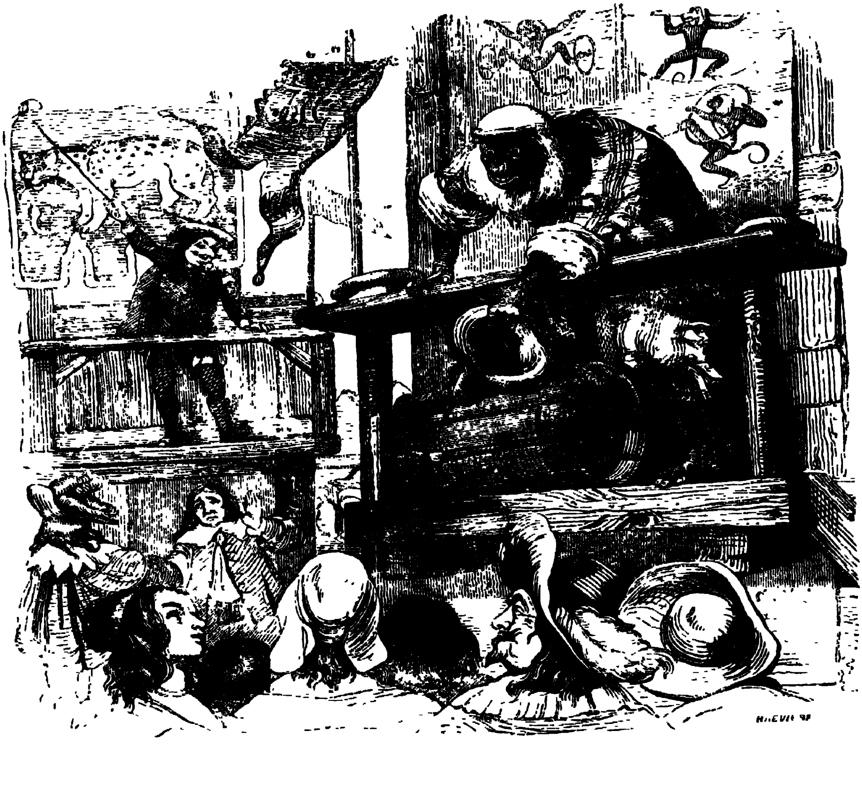
On a fine morning in May, two bees set forward in quest of honey; the one wise and temperate, the other careless and extravagant They soon arrived at a garden enriched with aromatic herbs, the most fragrant flowers, and the most delicious fruits. They regaled themselves for a time on the various dainties that were spread before them: the one loading his thigh at intervals with provisions for the hive against the distant winter; the other revelling in sweets, without regard to anything but his present gratification. At length they found a wide-mouthed phial that hung beneath the bough of a peach-tree, filled with honey ready tempered, and exposed to their taste in the most alluring manner The thoughtless epicure, spite of all his friend's remonstrances, plunged headlong into the vessel, resolving to indulge himself in all the pleasures of sensuality. The philosopher, on the other hand, sipped a little with caution; but being suspicious of danger, flew off to fruits and flowers; where, by the moderation of his meals, he improved his relish for the true enjoyment of them. In the evening, however, he called upon his friend, to enquire whether he would return to the hive; but found him surfeited in sweets, which he was as unable to leave as to enjoy. Clogged in his wings, enfeebled in his feet, and his whole frame totally enervated, he was but just able to bid his friend adieu, and to lament with his latest breath, that though a taste of pleasure might quicken the relish of life, an unrestrained indulgence is inevitable destruction.

ÆSOP AT PLAY.

An Athenian one day found Æsop at play with a company of little boys, at their childish diversions, and began to jeer and laugh at him for it. The old fellow, who was too much of a wag himself to suffer others to ridicule him, took a bow, unstrung, and laid it upon the ground. Then calling the censorious Athenian, "Now, philosopher," said he, "expound the riddle if you can, and tell us what the unstrung bow implies." The man, after racking his brains, and scratching his pate about it a considerable time, to no purpose, at last gave it up, and declared he knew not what to make of it. "Why," says Æsop, laughing, "if you keep a bow always bent, it will break presently; but if you let it go slack, it will be the fitter for use when you want it."

THE TWO SLEEP-WALKERS.

One summer-morn, as darkness fled,
Two walking dreamers rose from bed,
Their foolish pranks, through sleep, to play,
Pursuing each his fav'rite way.
One, on the roofs, from house to house,
Sprung like a cat that spies a mouse;
The other paced, devoid of fear,
The railing of a lofty pier.
But him a prudent person spied,
And gently by the hand decoy'd,
Far from the pier's tremendous steep,
Then safely rous'd him from his sleep.
The other had a different lot—
For while, like nitre quick and hot,
From roof to roof the phantom flew,
The noise a pedant's notice drew,
Who from his garret's sky-light casement
Beheld our dreamer with amazement,
And like a grave logician cried,
Proving with syllogistic pride
That folks should rest within by night:
The dreamer starts: fear dims his sight;
His eye with horror spans the street;
—A gulf that yawns beneath his feet:
His limbs give way, and on the stones
Tumbling amain, he breaks his bones.
The walking dreamer here is meant
The state of youth to represent,
With all that ignorance so blind,
Which for its safeguard is design'd.
Watch by its side—its steps partake,
With patient care, till it awake;
Else all our pains are overthrown.
Be silent—and the day's our own.
See that the proper path it keep,
So long as reason lies asleep:
But woo it gently by the hand,
Inculcate nothing—nought command.
Guard it from ill, and good 'twill learn,
When good and ill it can discern:
The master's rules may then succeed,
To close and crown the work with speed.



THE MONKEY AND THE LEOPARD.

THE MONKEY AND THE LEOPARD.

The monkey and the leopard both made a good harvest at the fair; each had bills pasted about the place. One of them said: "Gentlemen, my glory and renown are known and thoroughly acknowledged. The king has honoured me with a visit; and when I die he desires that a muff may be made out of my skin, so beautiful and variegated are the spots on it." The advertisement proved attractive; every one set out to see the leopard; but this being shortly accomplished, they soon came out again. The monkey on his part said: "Come, gentlemen, come, if you have any regard for your soul's welfare, and behold the innumerable tricks of your humble servant. The diversity of which my neighbour the leopard boasts, is only on the outside, mine is within. Your friend Jacko, son-in-law of Bertrand, the pope's monkey, has just arrived in this town, with his suite, in three carriages, on purpose to talk to you (for you must know that he speaks); he can dance on the slack-rope, tumble, and perform a thousand wonderful feats; do you think he would have the face to charge you sixpence?—no gentlemen, he asks but one penny: and if anybody thinks it too dear, the money shall be returned to him." The monkey was right; it is not a motley coat that pleases; but a well stored mind. The one always has a fund of agreeable sayings; the other in less than an instant wearies the spectators. Oh! how many of our highest nobility, like the leopard, carry all their talent on their back.

THE RAT AND THE OYSTER.

A rat who lived in a field and was possessed of very few brains, one day deserted his hole and set out to view the world. He had not travelled far from his narrow habitation, before he exclaimed: "How large and spacious is the earth, there are the Apennines, and here is the Caucasus; the smallest molehill seemed a mountain in his eyes. After some days our traveller arrived at a place where the sea had washed numerous oysters ashore; at first he imagined they must be vessels cast away. "Ah!" said he, "my father was a poor stay-at-home; he had never travelled all his life; but as for me, I have passed the deserts and have already seen the maritime empire." All the oysters except one, were closed, which remained open to gape at the sun, and taste the reviving balm of the dewy zephyr; this one was exceedingly white and plump, and of matchless flavour. "What do I perceive!" said the rat, "surely this must be fit to eat, and if I am not mistaken in its appearance, I shall fare nobly to day." Master rat greedily approached the shell, and stretching out his neck to take it, found himself caught in a trap, for the oyster, suddenly closing, held him fast.

This Fable bears more than one moral; it shews that those who are unacquainted with the world are astonished at every trifle; and we may also learn by it, that he who strives illegally to possess himself of the goods of others, often, like the rat, gets caught in a snare; what can be more true, than that the biter is frequently the first to be bitten?

THE BIRDS OF PASSAGF.

Here all is weigh'd by calculations;
Fame, happiness, the doom of nations;
And still the first of statesmen he,
Who governs by the rule of three.
Had they, who Mexico subdued,
So wise and safe a plan pursued,
That world had happier far remain'd
And this been less severely drain'd.
  Here let the sage logicians teach,
Whom Æsop has endow'd with speech.
It matters not, if truth appear,
What shape or garb the goddess wear.
The vintage o'er, unnumber'd troops
Cleaving the air in buoyant groups,
Of birds of passage, richly fed
Within our orchards, homeward sped.
Accomplish'd now the tedious flight,
They at their capital alight;
Where every eye, with flouting gaze,
The bold adventurers surveys.
Acquaintance, kindred, sire, and son,
Flick'ring and hopping, round them run ·
And soon the crowd, from rudely peering,
With envious murmurs fall to sneering:—
  "How sleek," they cry, "our travellers grow!
What health and bloom their aspects shew;
With stomachs thus so amply stor'd,
They may a longer fast afford.
Sure, when they took their flight in May,
They were as lank as we to-day.
This shews what sudden gain must rise
From trips to man's more clement skies."
The leader of the birds of flight
Returns; "So far, my friends, you're right:
Abroad, both grain and fruits abound,
And plenteous refuse there is found:
But to return unhurt, to shun
The storm, the snare, the deadly gun—
Here lies the hazard. Be so kind,
My gentle friends, to call in mind
How many left this shore in May;
Then count the number here to-day.
By calculation thus alone
The profits of the journey's known."

THE SOW AND THE BITCH.

A sow and a bitch happening to meet, a debate arose between them concerning their fruitfulness. The bitch insisted upon it that she brought more at a litter and oftener than any other four-legged creature. "Ay," said the sow, "you do indeed, but you are always in so much haste about it, that you bring your puppies into the world blind."

"The more haste the worst speed," is a most excellent proverb, and worthy to be worn upon some conspicuous parts of our dress or equipage, that it may give us a proper check when we go about anything of importance, which otherwise we might be apt to pursue with too much hurry and precipitation.

THE SPARROW AND THE HARE.

A hare being seized by an eagle, squeaked out in a most woeful manner. A sparrow, that sat upon a tree just by, and saw it, could not forbear being unseasonably witty, but called out and said to the hare, "Soho! what, sit there and be killed; prithee, up and away; I dare say, if you would but try, so swift a creature as you are, would easily escape from the eagle." As he was going on with his cruel raillery, down came a hawk, and snapped him up, and notwithstanding his vain cries and lamentations, fell to devouring him in an instant. The hare, who was just expiring, received comfort from this accident, even in the agonies of death, and addressing her last words to the sparrow, said, "You, who just now insulted my misfortunes with so much security, as you thought, may please to shew us how well you can bear the like, now it has befallen you."

Nothing is more impertinent than for people to be giving their opinion and advice in cases which, were they to be their own, themselves would be as much at a loss what to do. But so great an itch have most men to be directors in the affairs of others, either to shew the superiority of their understanding, or their own security and exemption from the ills they would have removed, that they frowardly and conceitedly obtrude their counsel even at the hazard of their own safety and reputation.

THE BOY AND THE SILKWORM.

An idle boy, instead of minding his book was constantly engaged in breeding silkworms.—Seeing one of them busily employed in enclosing herself in her silken shroud, he said to her; "Why, you simple animal, do you bestow so much labour to entomb yourself?"—"You are in a mistake," replied the silkworm; "what you conceive to be a coffin, is the vehicle that conveys me to a happier lot. I bestow this labour, in order that I may receive wings, and not always continue to be a helpless worm."—The father, who had been listening to this, at a distance, thus addressed his son. "Attend to the silkworm's instruction:—he who would not live in obscurity all his days, must early store his mind with wisdom and industry, regardless of the labour which is attendant on the short period of education."

THE SHEEP-BITER.

A CERTAIN shepherd had a dog, upon whose fidelity he relied very much; for whenever he had occasion to be absent himself, he committed the care and tuition of his flock to the charge of this dog; and to encourage him to do his duty cheerfully, he fed him constantly with sweet curds-and-whey, and sometimes threw him a crust or two extra. Yet, notwithstanding this, no sooner was his back turned, than the treacherous cur fell foul of the flock, and devoured the sheep, instead of guarding and defending them. The shepherd, being informed of this, was resolved to hang him; and the dog, when the rope was about his neck and he was just going to be tied up, began to expostulate with his master, asking him why he was so unmercifully bent against him, who was his own servant and creature, and had only committed one or two crimes; and why he did not rather execute revenge upon the wolf, who was a constant, open and declared enemy? "Nay," replied the shepherd, "it is for that very reason that I think you ten times more worthy of death than him; from the wolf I expect nothing but hostilities, and therefore guard against him; you I depended upon as a just and faithful servant, and fed and encouraged you accordingly; therefore your treachery is the more notorious, and your ingratitude the more unpardonable."

No injuries are so bitter, and so inexcusable as those which proceed from men whom we trusted as friends, and in whom we placed confidence. An open enemy, however inveterate, may overpower and destroy us, or perhaps may hurt and afflict us only in some measure; but as such a treatment cannot surprise us, because we expected no less, neither can it give us half the grief and uneasiness of mind which we are apt to feel when we find ourselves wronged by the treachery and falsehood of a friend.

THE FATHER AND HIS TWO SONS.

Two youths, the offspring of a sage,
And twins in merit, form, and age,
Who should have bless'd the reverend swain,
Yet serv'd to fill his heart with pain.
Their towering views and youthful fire
Displeas'd their unambitious sire.
They long'd to quit their native soil,
Their humble home, and rural toil;
To seek the court; by talents shine
And found a new—a noble line.
The foolish plan the sage perceiv'd,
Whose wiser mind its dangers griev'd.
His children's good, now all his aim,
He rested not on wealth or fame,
But on Contentment's middle state,
And Virtue, her attendant mate.
"Children," said he, "mine end draws near—
Else should my words be more severe;

Parental power, so quickly o'er,
Is but contemn'd—of that no more.
No, ye are free— your project vain
I neither can nor will constrain.
Yet, ere commenc'd your wish'd career,
One simple tale with candour hear:
Reflected thence, your error see,
And wisely learn the truth like me:
For I had both your years and fire,
When told the story by my sire.
" 'From the same rock—their common source,
Two sister rills deriv'd their course.
Equal their pure their infant state;
But ah! unequal far their fate.
One, thro' the simple village green,
Pursued in peace its path serene;
Mid smiling orchards next meander'd
Where nymphs and swains, at evening wander'd;
Their pastures fatten'd—cheer'd their lands;
And minister'd to all demands:
Hence, sacred deem'd, no lawless force
Dar'd violate its hallow'd course:
No alien stream its current cross'd,
Or in its limpid wave was lost.
But, pure as when it first began,
The virgin rill to ocean ran.
" 'Far different was the other's lot:
Disdaining soon its native spot,
The city's glittering scenes it sought:
But ah! what ills the journey brought!
A Nabob proud its flood surrounds,
And dams it up within his grounds;
There, the superb parterre to grace,
It rises from a gorgeous vase,
Where gold and marble charm the eye
And, trees o'er-arching, jets on high,
Tho' flatter'd by th' admirer's gaze,
Few know the painful price it pays,
Now pent in subterraneous walls,
Where wealth and art had scoop'd canals;
Now twisted, check'd, at pleasure train'd,
Nor liberty nor name retain'd;
Now squeez'd in arches, dash'd o'er rocks.
Now guarded by the cistern's locks;
At last it leaves this gay retreat
(The owner's pride—the rivulet's hate)

For a worse end,—to rot and stink,
In the same mansion's filthy sink,
Which had beheld its varied woes:
And thus its sad adventures close!'"
Here the good shepherd ceas'd to speak,
While tears bedew'd his furrow'd cheek,
One youth the moral wisely drew,
And to his labour turn'd anew;
The other roam'd from court to court,
For joys that with our fancy sport.
And in the fate to each decreed,
The rivulets and the twins agreed.

THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

A thief, coming to rob a certain house in the night, was disturbed in his attempts by a fierce, vigilant dog, who kept barking at him continually. Upon which the thief, thinking to stop his mouth, threw him a piece of bread; but the dog refused it with indignation, telling him, that before, he only suspected him to be a bad man, but now, upon his offering to bribe him, he was confirmed in his opinion: and that, as he was entrusted with the guardianship of his master's house, he should never cease barking while such a rogue as he lay lurking about it.

A man who is very free in his protestations of friendship, or offers of great civility upon the first interview, may meet with applause and esteem from fools, but contrives his schemes of that sort to little or no purpose in the company of men of sense. It is a common and known maxim to suspect an enemy even the more for his endeavouring to convince us of his benevolence; because the oddness of the thing puts us upon our guard, and makes us conclude that some pernicious design must be couched under so sudden and unexpected a turn of behaviour. But it is no unnecessary caution to be upon the watch against even indifferent people, when we perceive them uncommonly forward in their approaches of civility and kindness. The man who at first sight makes us an offer which is due only to particular and well acquainted friends, must be either a knave, and intends by such a bait to draw us into his net, or a fool, with whom we ought to avoid having any communication. Thus far the consideration of this Fable may be useful to us in private life; what it contains further in relation to the public is, that a man truly honest will never let his mouth be stopped with a bribe, but the greater the offer which is designed to buy his silence, the louder, and more constantly, will he open against the miscreants who would practise upon it.

THE CROOKED TREE.

Among a number of tall, straight, and flourishing trees, there happened to grow a humble, crooked one, who constantly endured the scoff of his proud companions. The proprietor of the estate one day went with a timber-merchant to survey the wood. An agreement was soon made, and the ensuing week a number of woodmen where employed to fell the trees,—when the only one that escaped the axe, was the poor, despised, crooked one.

Beauty often involves us in that danger from which natural deformity escapes.

THE BELLY AND THE LIMBS.

Menenius Agrippa, a Roman consul, being deputed by the senate to appease a dangerous tumult and sedition of the people who refused to pay the taxes necessary for carrying on the business of the state, convinced them of their folly by delivering to them the following Fable :—

"My friends and countrymen," said he, "attend to my words. It once happened that the members of the human body, taking some exception at the conduct of the belly, resolved no longer to grant him the usual supplies. The tongue first, in a seditious speech, aggravated their grievances; and after highly extolling the activity and diligence of the hands and feet, set forth how hard and unreasonable it was that the fruits of their labour should be squandered away upon the insatiable cravings of a fat and indolent paunch, which was entirely useless, and unable to do anything towards helping itself. This speech was received with unanimous applause by all the members. Immediately the hands declared they would work no more; the feet determined to carry no further the load with which they had hitherto beeen oppressed; nay the very teeth refused to prepare a single morsel more for his use. In this distress the belly besought them to consider maturely, and not foment so senseless a rebellion. 'There is none of you,' said he, 'can be ignorant that whatsoever you bestow upon me, is immediately converted to your use, and dispersed by me for the good of you all into every limb. But he remonstrated in vain; for during the clamours of passion, the voice of reason is always disregarded. It being therefore impossible for him to quiet the tumult, he starved for want of their assistance, and the body wasted away to a skeleton. The limbs, grown weak and languid, were sensible at last of their error, and would fain have returned to their respective duties; but it was now too late, death had taken possession of the whole, and they all perished together."

THE FLY.

"There is nothing more cruel than the swallow," said the fly; "for no sooner do they behold us than we fall a prey to their voracity." As the fly uttered this complaint, she flew into an adjoining stable. "Here," said she, "I am safe from such destroyers!"—But on looking about, she found she was everywhere surrounded with cobwebs and spiders.—"Stupid that I am," exclaimed she, "why do I not visit palaces?—no such guests are permitted there." She immediately winged her way to court, and exclaimed, "How delightful is everything! here I shall live undisturbed by swallow or spider." Behold, at the approach of evening, innumerable tapers were lighted.—"Ah!" exclaimed the fly, "how enchanting this is!—now I can enjoy the night as well as the day!" —Scarcely had she pronounced this, when she approached too near the flame of a candle, and her wings being singed, she fell and was trodden to death.

THE STARLING, THE PARROT, AND THE MAGPIE.

'Twas strutting up a garden walk,
A starling heard a parrot talk,
And as her talents he admir'd,
From her instruction straight desir'd :
Though many a youth of fluent speech
In vain had tried the bird to teach.
Flatter'd, no doubt, by his request,
The modest parrot fears exprest ;
But no refusal would he brook,
So she the labour undertook.
The pupil long attention paid,
And really some improvement made ;
Words he could speak with accent true,
But these indeed were very few ;
Yet in his own opinion taught,
Elated much, a pie he sought ;
And that his praise he might repeat,
Offer'd the youngster to complete
In every branch of education,
Befitting his exalted station.—
Terms settled, straight the pie was plac'd
Beneath his care, who learn'd in haste
All that his stammering tutor knew,—
Then homeward as proficient flew,
As those return from school or college,
Who, swerving from the path of knowledge,
Are taught to speak from bad orations,
And knowledge gain from bad translations ;
Neglecting books that study claim ;
And masters of establish'd fame.

THE TWO DOGS.

A boy kept two dogs, a spaniel and his puppy. The young one was named Pantaloon, and contributed daily to his master's amusement, who had taught him to mount guard, to dance, to swim, fetch and carry, etc.—The boy now concluded, as Pantaloon had learned these tricks so aptly, that Snarl, his parent, would be yet more ready. Snarl, who was in other respects a very good dog, had no taste for these refined accomplishments ; hitherto he had been only told to watch the house, and come when he was called. No sooner was Snarl placed upright against the wall, than he fell upon all fours. The elder brother was now called in, who advised that the old scholar should be taught with a cane, and see what effect that would have : he, however, performed no better, and, at length, began to growl, saying : "I am too old to be taught now ; and let my example convince you, that youth is the only time for improvement."



THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A LITTLE lamb approach'd a purling brook;
It was in summer time, the heat extreme.
By chance a wolf his morning beverage took
Near the same place, at the same crystal stream.
The prowling robber long had fasted,
Nor lamb nor mutton many days had tasted;
Therefore with pinching want his paunch was pining,
He drank his fill, but long'd the more for dining.
With joy the lamb he spied, then growling said,
"Sirrah! how dare you thus disturb my drink?"
The lamb in answer meekly bow'd his head,
"I trouble not the water, sir, I think;—
Besides, I humbly beg to shew
Your worship is above, and I below;
And I have noticed every brook and rill
Pursue their courses constantly down hill."—
"Oh! you chop logic!" said the churlish brute:
"I can chop too:—you've done me other wrong.
Youngster, with me 'tis better not dispute:
You've tarnish'd my fair fame with sland'rous tongue.
This glaring fact I chanced to hear
From good and high authority last year."—
"Last year! observe, dread sir, I'm not yet shorn.—
I at the time you mention was not born!"
"Well then, I guess it was your elder brother,
By whom this great and foul offence was done;
You're all so like, I don't know one from t'other:"
"Indeed, my lord, I am an only son!"
"I'm sure 'twas one of your vile kindred,
Nor shall my just revenge be longer hinder'd.
Your clan in all its branches wish my fall,
Dogs, shepherds, rams, ewes, wethers, lambs and all!"
Thus said, he seized without more form of law
The ready prize, to glut his empty maw.

This truth my simple Fable does attest:
He who is strongest always argues best.

THE THIEVES AND THE COCK.

SOME thieves entering a house with a design to rob it, when they got in, found nothing worth taking but a cock, so they carried him off. But as they were about to kill him, he begged hard for his life, putting them in mind how useful he was to mankind by crowing and calling them up betimes to their work. "You villain," replied they, "it is for that very reason we will wring your head off; for you alarm and keep people waking, so that we cannot rob at quiet for you."

THE BLACKAMOOR.

A CERTAIN man, having bought a blackamoor, was so simple as to think that the colour of his skin was only dirt and filth, which he had contracted for want of due care under his former master. This fault, he fancied, might easily be removed. So he ordered the poor black to be put into a tub, and was at a considerable charge in providing ashes, soap, and scrubbing-brushes for the operation. To work they went, rubbing and scouring his skin all over, but to no manner of purpose; for when they had repeated their washings several times, and were grown quite weary, all they got by it was, that the wretched blackamoor caught cold and died.

THE SERPENT AND THE MAN.

A CHILD was playing in a meadow, and by chance trod upon a serpent. The serpent in his fury, turned and bit the child with his poisonous fangs, so that he died almost immediately. The father of the child, inspired with grief and revenge, took a weapon in his hand, and pursuing the serpent before he could get into his hole, struck at him, and lopped off a piece of his tail. The next day, hoping by a stratagem to finish his revenge, he brought to the serpent's hole, honey, meal and salt, and desired him to come forth, protesting that he only sought a reconciliation on both sides. However, he was not able to decoy the serpent forth, who only hissed from within to this purpose: "In vain you attempt a reconciliation; for as long as the memory of the dead child and the mangled tail subsists, it will be impossible for you and I to have any charity for each other."

"The man who has injured will never forgive you," is a Spanish proverb, and after their dry way a very good one. It seems odd at first sight, because one would think the backwardness to forgive should be on the side of him who has received the injury; but the truth of the maxim lies with much more certainty on the other side. The consciousness of having provoked the resentment of another will dwell so continually upon the mind of the aggressor, that he cannot rest till he has finished his work, and put it, as much as possible out of his enemy's power to make any return upon him. Morality bids us forgive our enemies, and the voice of reason confirms the same; but neither reason nor morality bids us enter into a friendship with, or repose a confidence in, those who have injured us.

THE FROG AND THE MOUSE.

THERE was once a great emulation between the frog and the mouse, which should be master of the fen, and wars ensued upon it; but the crafty mouse, lurking under the grass in ambuscade, made sudden sallies, and often surprised the enemy at a disadvantage. The frog excelling in strength, and being more able to leap abroad and take the field, challenged the mouse to single combat; the mouse accepted the challenge, and each of them entered the lists armed with the point of a bulrush instead of a spear. A kite, sailing in the air, beheld them afar off; and while they were eagerly bent upon each other's death, this fatal enemy descended souse upon them, and with her crooked talons, carried off both the champions.

THE UNIVERSAL APPARITION.

A RAKE by ev'ry passion rul'd,
With ev'ry vice his youth had cool'd;
Disease his tainted blood assails;
His spirits droop, his vigour fails:
With secret ills at home he pines,
And, like infirm old age declines.
As twing'd with pain he pensive sits;
And raves, and prays, and swears by fits;
A ghastly phantom, lean and wan,
Before him rose, and thus began:
"My name, perhaps, hath reach'd your ear;
Attend, and be advis'd by Care.
Nor love, nor honour, wealth nor pow'r,
Can give the heart a cheerful hour
When health is lost. Be timely wise:
With health all taste of pleasure flies."
Thus said, the phantom disappears;
The wary counsel wak'd his fears;
He now from all excess abstains;
With physic purifies his veins;
And, to procure a sober life,
Resolves to venture on a wife.
But now again the sprite ascends;
Where'er he walks his ear attends:
Insinuates that beauty's frail;
That perseverance must prevail;
With jealousies his brain inflames,
And whispers all her lovers' names.
In other hours she represents
His household charge, his annual rents;
Increasing debts, perplexing duns,
And nothing for his younger sons.
Straight all his thought to gain he turns,
And with the thirst of lucre burns.
But, when possest of fortune's store,
The spectre haunts him more and more:
Sets want and misery in view,
Bold thieves and all the murd'ring crew;
Alarms him with eternal frights,
Infests his dream, or wakes his nights.
How shall he chase this hideous guest?
Pow'r may perhaps protect the rest.
To pow'r he rose: again the sprite
Besets him morning, noon, and night;

Talks of ambition's tottering seat,
How envy persecutes the great;
Of rival hate, of treach'rous friends,
And what disgrace his fall attends.
The court he quits, to fly from Care,
And seeks the peace of rural air:
His groves, his fields, amus'd his hours;
He prun'd his trees, he rais'd his flow'rs.
But Care again his steps pursues;
Warns him of blasts of blighting dews,
Of plund'ring insects, snails and rains,
And droughts that starv'd the labour'd plains.
Abroad, at home, the spectre's there:
In vain we seek to fly from Care.
At length he thus the ghost address'd:
"Since thou must be my constant guest,
Be kind, and follow me no more;
For Care by right should go before."

THE PIGEON AND THE WINDMILL.

"Bless me," exclaimed a young pigeon, "what strange creatures there are upon the earth!—The very sight of them almost frightens us to death. Ah, my dear mother, for such inexperienced children as I, it were better to stay at home, unless their parents go with them. I was just now in such a perilous situation, that I thought I should have lost my life."—"Thus it happens, my dear," said the mother quite alarmed, "when children think themselves wiser than their parents.—I suppose a cat was near seizing you."—"O no mother!" replied the young pigeon, "I am not quite so simple as that, though I am but young."—"Then I suppose the hawk was approaching while you were on your journey?"—"Oh, how you talk!—I know better than to let him come near me."—"Then what was this dreadful thing, chatterbox?—for you keep me in suspense."—"Do not be angry, mother, and I will tell you. As I was flying about the fields, I saw an enormous animal, with four long wings, and a great body; but I could not see his feet, they were hidden under him, as he sat on the grass. He had placed himself on the top of a hill, and I not suspecting it was anything alive, had seated myself on the point of one of his wings. Directly he perceived this, he began to flutter and shake his monstrous pinions, and so terrible was the noise, that I flew away, without even venturing once to look behind me."—"For shame you simpleton! you make a jest of things that are really dangerous, and are terrified at things which in their nature are harmless. The enormous bird at which you are so terrified, is nothing but a machine; the wings are affixed to it, and set in motion by the wind; in short with men, it is called a windmill."

Persons who are insensible of real danger, and think themselves very courageous, resemble this pigeon. In the dark, they are alarmed at every strange appearance, and even a stick dressed up with a coat, appears to them an object of terror.

MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

A MAN was felling a tree on the bank of a river, and by chance let his hatchet slip out of his hand, which dropped into the water, and immediately sunk to the bottom. Being, therefore, in great distress for the loss of his tool, he sat down and bemoaned himself most lamentably. Upon this, Mercury appeared to him, and, being informed of the cause of his complaint, dived to the bottom of the river, and, coming up again, shewed the man a golden hatchet, demanding if that were his. He denied that it was. Upon which Mercury dived a second time, and brought up a silver one. The man refused it, alleging, likewise, that this was not his. He dived a third time, and fetched up the individual hatchet the man had lost; upon sight of which, the poor wretch was overjoyed, and took it with all humility and thankfulness. Mercury was so pleased with the fellow's honesty, that he gave him the other two into the bargain, as a reward for his just dealing. The man goes to his companions, and, giving them an account of what had happened, one of them went presently to the river side, and let his hatchet fall designedly into the stream; then, sitting down upon the bank, he commenced weeping and lamenting, as if he had been really and sorely afflicted. Mercury appeared as before, and, diving, brought him up a golden hatchet, asking if that were the hatchet he had lost. Transported at the precious metal, he answered yes, and went to snatch it greedily. But the god, detesting his abominable impudence, not only refused to give him that, but would not so much as let him have his own hatchet again.

Notwithstanding the proneness of mankind to do evil, and the account which some find in playing the knave, yet there cannot be invented a more true and reasonable maxim, than that by which we are assured, that "honesty is the best policy." If we consider it in respect to the other world, there never was a religion but strictly required it of its votaries. If we examine it upon account of this, we shall find that the honest man, provided his other talents be not deficient, always carries the preference, in our esteem, before any other, in whatever business he thinks fit to employ himself.

THE LION AND THE WOLF.

THE lion, having assembled the animals, ascended his tribunal-seat to administer justice. The cow first addressed him, and demanded retribution for the loss of her calf, which had been stolen by some one unknown. The lion, casting a look round, to see if any of the assembly could give him information on the subject, the wolf said, in an earnest manner, "Sire, I can safely affirm that I know nothing of the robbery."—"And who accused you of it?" said the king. "Slanderer," he exclaimed, turning to the cow, "you are sensible that I could not be the marauder, for I am at this time very ill."—"Be silent!" vociferated the lion; "it is the voice of conscience which speaks in you—you have stolen the calf! and I command the bear to be your executioner." The wolf was then torn to pieces; and in its intestines were discovered the remains of the poor calf.

Whoever pleads to an accusation before it is directed to him, manifests an over anxiety which indicates a participation of guilt.

THE HARPER.

A FELLOW that used to play upon his harp, and sing to it, in little ale-houses, and made a shift, by the help of those narrow confined walls, to please the dull sots who heard him, from hence entertained an ambition of shewing his parts in public, where he fancied he could not fail of raising a great reputation and fortune in a very short time. He was, accordingly, admitted upon trial; but the spaciousness of the place, and the throng of the people, so deadened and weakened both his voice and instrument, that scarcely either of them could be heard; and where they could, it sounded so wretchedly in the ears of his refined audience, that he was universally hissed off the stage.

When we are commended for our performances by people of much flattery or little judgment, we should be sure not to value ourselves upon it; for want of which, many a vain, unthinking man has at once exposed and lost himself to the world. A buffoon may be very agreeable to a company disposed to be mirthful over a glass of wine, who would not be fit to open his mouth in a senate, or upon a subject where sound sense and a grave and serious behaviour are expected. It is not the diverting a little insignificant, injudicious audience or society, which can gain us a proper esteem, or insure our success, in a place which calls for a performance of the first rate; we should have either allowed abilities to please the most refined tastes, or judgment enough to know that we want them and to have a care how we submit ourselves to the trial.

THE CAT AND THE COCK.

THE cat having a mind to make a meal of the cock, seized him one morning by surprise, and asked him what he had to say for himself, why slaughter should not be passed upon him? The cock replied, that he was serviceable to mankind, by crowing in the morning, and calling them up to their daily labour. "That is true," said the cat, "and is the very objection that I have against you; for you make such a shrill, impertinent noise, that people cannot sleep for you. Besides, you make no scruple of marrying your mother and sisters."—"Well," said the cock, "this I do not deny; but I do it to procure eggs and chickens for my master."—"Ah! villain," said the cat, "hold your wicked tongue; such impieties as these declare that you are no longer fit to live."

When a wicked man, in power, has a mind to glut his appetite in any respect, innocence, or even merit, is no protection against him. The cries of justice, and the voice of reason, are of no effect upon a conscience hardened in iniquity, and a mind versed in a long practice of wrong and robbery.

THE MARAUDING PIKE.

A PIKE, which had long been the terror of the stream, said to himself: "I, who reign here arbitrarily, and am the Nero of my species, why am I limited to this narrow stream!—why do I not immediately launch into the boundless ocean, and satiate at large my sanguinary appetite?" He immediately commenced his journey, and was no sooner in the ocean, than a tremendous shark, who never spares friend or foe, opened his terrific jaws, and in a moment devoured him.

THE VIZIER AND THE CLOWN.

As strokes of genuine wit, I praise
Not jests alone, which laughter raise;
(This were a sorry taste indeed)
But hints that to instruction lead,
And thought awake, though giving birth
To no convulsive burst of mirth.
Such, chiefly when they injure none,
As strokes of genuine wit I own.
Some may be gloomy, grave and wise,
A picture when the shade we prize.
This is the school I most approve;
The bold emphatic style I love.
And, from a Persian master, I
A copy of the kind will try.
His country once a premier vex'd,
Like Haman in the holy text
And made the Prince, whose power he wrested
To basest uses, be detested.
Where'er he went, a saucy guard
With insolence his way prepar'd;
And all were bound, when seen afar,
To kneel before his gilded car.
One day, as he to council roll'd,
His pride by gorgeous pomp cajol'd,
Approaching a sepulchral ground,
A peasant there at work he found,
Who seem'd to seek or hide a store
In these cadaverous regions hoar.
The clown, whose labour never ceas'd,
Look'd on, with calm unstartled breast,
While all the little army pass'd,
And even its lord himself at last,
Darting ferocious looks around,
Each heart, as usual, to confound.
The rustic's rudeness stung his view;
And near the crusty clown he drew,
Who still dug on, without respect,
Or rather with design'd neglect.
This mark'd affront so bold and new,
The proud Vizier's resentment drew:
But, as on ground so much rever'd
To give his passion vent he fear'd,
Feigning, for once, a mild address,
"My friend," he calmly said, "I guess,

By that unmov'd and silent air,
Some mighty and momentous care—
Some object that absorbs thy mind,
To our approach has made thee blind.
No vengeance dread—but freely speak;
Among these bones what dost thou seek?'
"What do I seek?—those sculls survey—
Well then—I seek a certain way
To know, in this research of mine,
My father's scull from that of thine;
But seek in vain—no means appear—
All are like—all equal here.
One sees no emblem in the grave
To mark the sovereign from the slave.
When thou and I shall thither go,
Should our descendants wish to know,
Each their respective sire's remains,
They'll only lose their time and pains."

THE EAGLE AND THE RABBITS.

An eagle came to a litter of rabbits, and bore off the young ones. The parents, in the most piteous accents, prayed the tyrant to spare their offspring; but in vain: he tore them to pieces before their face. The sorrows of the injured pair collected together the other inhabitants of the warren, who, determined to punish the invader, mustered all their forces, and, in two successive nights, undermined the tree on which the eagle had built her nest. On the third night a violent storm arose, and blew down the tottering trunk: the nest descended with it, and the eaglets, incapable of flight, were either dashed to pieces, or became an easy prey to the savage beasts of the forest, while the injured rabbits beheld their ruin unhurt.

The mighty and most secure should avoid offending the poor and humble; for the latter, when united, are more than a match for the insolent and oppressive.

THE HORSE AND THE WASP.

A wasp having severely stung a horse, the latter kicked and pranced about, with an intention of destroying its tormentor.—"Your exertion is in vain," said the wasp; "for I am in such a secure place on your flank, that you cannot hurt me." The horse now tried the effect of mild treatment, and begged the wasp to desist; which drew the following reply from the little insect: "Mild words will often effect what rude and violent treatment cannot;—as a proof of which, I will sting you no more."

THE TWO OWLS AND THE SPARROW

Two formal owls together sat,
Conferring thus in solemn chat:
" How is the modern taste decay'd!
Where's the respect to wisdom paid?
Our worth the Grecian sages knew;
They gave our sires the honour due;
They weigh'd the dignity of fowls,
And pried into the depth of owls.
Athens, the seat of learned fame,
With gen'ral voice rever'd our name;
On merit title was conferr'd,
And all ador'd th' Athenian bird."
" Brother, you reason well," replies
The solemn mate, with half-shut eyes;
" Right—Athens was the seat of learning;
And truly wisdom is discerning.
Besides, on Pallas' helm we sit,
The type and ornament of wit;
But now alas! we're quite neglected;
And a pert sparrow's more respected!"
A sparrow, who was lodg'd beside,
O'erhears them soothe each other's pride
And thus he nimbly vents his heat:
" Who meets a fool must find conceit.
I grant you were at Athens grac'd,
And on Minerva's helm were plac'd:
But ev'ry bird that wings the sky,
Except an owl, can tell you why.
From hence they taught their schools to know
How false we judge by outward show;
That we should never looks esteem,
Since fools as wise as you may seem.
Would ye contempt and scorn avoid,
Let your vain glory be destroy'd
Humble your arrogance of thought;
Pursue the ways by Nature taught:
So shall you find delicious fare,
And grateful farmers praise your care;
So shall sleek mice your chase reward,
And no keen cat find more regard."

THE EAGLE.

" WHY do you rear your eaglets in such elevated situations?" said a man to the eagle. The latter replied, " Would they venture so near the sun when arrived at the years of maturity, if I built my nest on the ground?"

THE CAT AND THE RAT.

There were four different animals, the cat, the owl, the rat, and the weasel, all of which had various propensities; but all frequented the trunk of a wild and savage-looking old pine-tree. One evening, a man surrounded this tree with a net. Early the next morning, the cat was going to seek her prey; but the shadow of her form prevented her from seeing the net, into which she, therefore, fell. Being in danger of perishing, she cried out piteously. The rat, hearing her plaint, hastened to her assistance; but was filled with joy, at finding in the captive his mortal enemy. "My dear friend," said the cat, "I know that you have a benevolent heart: let me entreat you, therefore, to commiserate my situation, and come and help me out of the snare into which I have fallen through ignorance. It will be doing me a kindness, for which I shall be always grateful; at the same time allow me to assure you of my great personal regard for you, and to inform you that I have always loved you with devoted affection. I was merely going, according to my usual morning custom, to seek my prey, when I was caught in this snare. My life is in your hands; come, therefore, and untie these knots."—"But what recompence shall I have?" asked the rat. "I promise you my eternal friendship and alliance," said the cat: "with my claws I will protect you against every enemy. The weasel and the screech-owl shall invite you to be of their dinner parties."—"You are an idiot," said the rat, "to suppose that I will be your deliverer. Learn, however, that I am not quite so foolish." Wishing Puss a good morning, the rat returned towards his retreat. The weasel hastened after him from his hole; but the rat climbed into a high tree, where he perceived the screech-owl. Though surrounded, however, on every side with danger, he effected his escape; and, returning to the cat, loosened the knots, and rescued the hypocrite. At this instant, the man who owned the snare appeared, and both these new acquaintances ran away; the rat keeping at a distance from his companion, and on the alert against any nefarious attempt upon his person. "Ah! my dear brother," said the cat, when they had got out of the reach of danger, "come and embrace me; your caution and suspicion offend me, and do me injustice. You cannot imagine I have forgotten that I owe to you my life."—"Nor," said the rat, "can you imagine that I have forgotten your late pretended humanity, concerning the owl and the weasel."

We should never form an alliance with an enemy unless forced by necessity.

THE LION AND THE FOX.

"Sire," said the fox to the lion, "I must inform you, or I shall burst with indignation. The ass defames your majesty, and says he cannot imagine what excellence I can discover in you. He speaks lightly of your courage, and maintains you never display any marks of generosity or justice: he, therefore, cannot esteem you." The lion sat silent for a time, and at length calmly said: "Let him say what he pleases; the character of a lion is not to be injured by the opinion of an ass. In the mean time, he who endeavours to incense me against others, and flatters me, to make me his dupe, him I detest: therefore begone, wretch, or you will perish!"



THE CAT AND THE RAT.

THE TONGUES.

Æsop's master having invited a large company to dinner, he was ordered to furnish the feast with the choicest dainties. Æsop accordingly laid out the money in tongues, which he served up with an appropriate sauce. The guests much commended the first course, as it furnished them with matter for conversation; but the second and third being the same, they were astonished, as well as the gentleman of the house, who asked if there were nothing else provided but tongues, and being answered there was not, he began to rail and abuse Æsop. "Did not I command you to prepare the choicest dainties?"—"And what excels the tongue?" replied Æsop: "it is the great channel of learning and philosophy. By this noble organ, addresses, commerce, contracts, eulogies, and marriages, are completely established. On this moves life itself; and, of course, nothing is equal to the tongue." The company extolled the wisdom of Æsop, and deemed it superior to that of his master. Some time after this, Xanthus gave another entertainment to the same guests, and Æsop was ordered to procure the worst meats, when, constant to his purpose, he again provided tongues. Xanthus, more incensed still, asked him if this was the entertainment he had ordered, and Æsop declared that he had exactly fulfilled his commands; "For what," he remarked, "is worse than the tongue? Is it not frequently the ruin of empires, cities, and private connections? Is it not the conveyance of calumnies and lies? In short, is it not the grand disturber of civil society?" Both master and company were filled with astonishment.

Æsop, by the entertainments which he had provided, paid a compliment to his master's company, who were scholars and philosophers, and reproached his master and master's wife, for Xanthus's lady was a noted shrew. The tongue is both a good and a bad member. By the tongue the philosopher conveys instruction: by the tongue the preacher advises and admonishes. In like manner, by the tongue, the dissatisfied rail, blaspheme, and express their resentment: by the tongue the termagant scolds. St James, in the third chapter of his general Epistle, gives an admirable description of the tongue:—"The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed cursing and blessing!"

THE MARTEN, THE HEN, AND THE CHICKEN.

A MARTEN was once caught in a trap. The pain he felt was much increased by the apprehension of the sudden death which awaited him on the intelligence being carried in-doors. In this hopeless situation, he was observed by a young chicken, who ran immediately to her mother, exclaiming: "Joy! joy! our mortal enemy is near his doom! let us increase his misery by making a jest of his misfortune!"—"No!" replied the old one, "stay here! it betrays an ignoble and dastardly heart to take pleasure in the woes of others, even though they be our most inveterate enemies."

THE SQUIRREL AND THE HORSE.

While some, with genius blest, produce
By care and labour works of use,
That long the reader's thoughts engage,
And live to charm a distant age:—
Others, devoid of sense and taste,
With equal zeal the minutes waste,
And time and talents misapply
On works of no utility;—
Trifles, like flow'rs, that greet the day,
And then, neglected, die away:—
Forgetful of this maxim trite,
That all should bear in mind who write;
He to no end who racks his brains,
Deserves but laughter for his pains.
Frisking one morn from tree to tree,
At ease, in perfect liberty,
A squirrel saw a manag'd horse
Impetuous bound along the course,
And while, to shew the rider's skill,
He gallop'd, rear'd, and leap'd at will;
Pertly, and insolent, indeed,
The squirrel thus address'd the steed:—
"Though much, my friend, the gaping throng
Admire thy motions firm and strong;
These wond'rous efforts in my eyes
Create nor transport nor surprise;
For I alike can jump with ease,
And run, and caper, if I please;
Spring o'er the brook that bubbling flows,
For few my antics can oppose:
We squirrels scorn to be controll'd,
And are, by nature, brisk and bold."
To whom, by anger much inflam'd,
Aptly the prancing horse exclaim'd:—
"Though all the village train confess
You jump and caper with address;
I fain would know, my honest friend,
To what these freaks and follies tend?
'Tis true I often scour the plain,
But never do I toil in vain;
My master, by my speed and might,
Gains health, and treasure, and delight;
And who'd refuse to labour hard,
When labour brings its own reward?"

THE ASS EATING THISTLES.

An ass was loaded with good provisions of several sorts, which, in time of harvest, he was carrying into the fields for his master and the reaper's to dine upon. By the way he met with a fine large thistle, and, being very hungry, began to mumble it; which, while he was doing, he entered into this reflection:—"How many greedy epicures would think themselves happy amidst such a variety of delicate viands as I now carry! But, to me, this bitter prickly thistle is more savoury and relishing than the most exquisite and sumptuous banquet."

Happiness and misery, and oftentimes pleasure and pain, exist merely in our imagination, and are no more to be accounted for than the difference of tastes. "That which is one man's meat, is another man's poison," is a proposition that ought to be allowed in all particulars, where the opinion is concerned, as well as in eating and drinking. Our senses must inform us whether a thing pleases or displeases, before we can declare our judgment of it; and that is to any man good or evil which his own understanding suggests to him to be so, and not that which is agreeable to another's fancy. And yet, as reasonable and as necessary as it is to grant this, how apt are we to wonder at people for not liking this or that, or how can they think so and so! This childish humour of wondering at the different tastes and opinions of others, occasions much uneasiness among the generality of mankind; but if we consider things rightly, why should we be more concerned at others differing from us in their way of thinking upon any subject whatever, than at their liking cheese or mustard, one or both of which we may happen to dislike? In truth, he that expects all mankind should be of his opinion, is much more stupid and unreasonable than the ass in the Fable.

THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

The wolves and the sheep had been a long time at war together; at last a cessation of arms was proposed, in order to a treaty of peace, and hostages were to be delivered on both sides for security. The wolves proposed that the sheep should give up their dogs on the one side, and that they would deliver up their young ones on the other. This proposal was agreed to; but no sooner executed, than the young wolves began to howl for want of their dams: the old ones took this opportunity to cry out, that the treaty was broken; and so, falling upon the sheep, who were destitute of their faithful guardians, the dogs, they worried and devoured them without control.

In all our transactions with mankind, we should have special regard how and with whom we trust ourselves. Men, in this respect, ought to look upon each other as wolves, and to keep themselves under a secure guard, and in a continual posture of defence: particularly upon any treaties of importance, the securities on both sides ought to be strictly considered; and each should act with so cautious a view to their own interest, as never to pledge or part with that which is the very essence and basis of their safety and well-being. And if this be a just and reasonable rule for men to govern themselves by, in their own private affairs, how much more fitting and necessary is it in any conjuncture wherein the public is concerned? If the enemy should demand our whole army for an hostage, the danger in our complying with it would be so gross and apparent, that we could not help observing it: but, perhaps, a country may equally expose itself by parting with a particular town or general, as its whole army; its safety, not seldom, depending as much upon one of the former as upon the latter. In short, hostages and securities may be something very dear to us, but ought never to be given up, if our welfare and preservation have any dependence upon them.

THE BLIND MAN AND THE SERPENT.

Two men travelled in company, one of whom was blind. Being overtaken by darkness, they went into a meadow, to rest, and spend the night, and at day-break, again saddled their horses in order to pursue their journey. The blind man began feeling about him for his whip; instead of which he met with a serpent which was benumbed with cold. Having taken it in his hand, he found it was softer than his whip; which delighted him, when imagining that he had not lost by the exchange, he got on horseback. When the sun rose, however, and it consequently grew lighter than before, his companion spied the serpent in the hands of the blind man; and crying out aloud, said to him: "Comrade! thou hast taken a serpent instead of thy whip; cast it from thee, lest it give thee a deadly embrace."

The blind man fancied that his companion had a mind to have his whip, and that he talked in this manner, because he thought it a fine one; upon which he answered: "Why dost thou envy my good fortune? I lost my whip which was worthless, and fate has thrown a new one in my way: think not I am so silly, but that I am able to distinguish a serpent from a whip."

"Comrade," returned the other, "I am bound by the laws of friendship and humanity to give thee notice of this imminent danger. If thou desirest to live, believe my words, and cast this serpent from thee." The blind man exasperated at these words, replied: "Why do you urge me, to cast away a thing which you want to take up?" His companion, in order to remove this notion, began to swear and protest that he had no such design; and that the thing he held in his hand was a serpent; but all these protestations could not remove the blind man's obstinacy. As soon as the air became warmer, and the sun shone fiercer, the serpent revived, and winding himself about the blind man's arm, bit him so deeply, that he almost instantly expired.

THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A wolf, clothing himself in the skin of a sheep, and getting in among the flock, by this means took the opportunity of devouring many of them. At last the shepherd discovered him, and cunningly fastening a rope about his neck, tied him up to a tree which stood hard by: some other shepherds happening to pass that way, and observing what he was about, drew near, and expressed their astonishment at it. "What brother," said one of them, "do you like hanging sheep?"—"No," replied the other, "but I like hanging a wolf whenever I catch him, though in the habit and garb of a sheep." Then shewing them their mistake, they applauded the justice of the execution.

No regard should be had to the mere habit or outside of any person, but to undisguised worth and intrinsic virtue. When we place our esteem upon the external garb, before informing ourselves of the qualities which it covers, we may often mistake evil for good, and instead of a sheep take a wolf into our protection.

THE SUN AND THE BIRDS OF NIGHT.

EACH solemn, horn'd or screeching fowl,
And all the ancient house of owl,
Within their gloomy holes retire,
When morning tips the clouds with fire;
To kill the day, in stupor doze,
And, sadly moping, wait its close.
It chanc'd the moon had found her way
Between the earth and orb of day;
Which oft, while tracing her ellipse,
Still happens, and is nam'd eclipse.
'Twas total now—and ne'er before,
Was known such gloom as Nature wore,
Portentous dread each trembling breast,
Except Don Owlet's tribe, impress'd.
He, issuing from his ruin'd pile,,
Exclaims with a triumphant smile:
"That flaring torch, the bane of night,
I knew would quickly lose its light.
Haste, let us now the Heavens ascend,
And to eternal Justice bend,
Which has reliev'd, reveng'd our eyes,
And quench'd the brand that scorch'd the skies.
This said, the bird, who lurks in gloom,
Shot proudly through th'etherial dome,
With all his tribe, whose screams of wo
Confirm'd the dread of men below.
But, while their harsh besotted cries
Of dismal mirth disturbs the skies,
The moon rolls on. Emerging bright
From her embrace, the sire of light
Blazes in majesty serene;
And nature's heart revives again.
But dear the dazzling splendour cost
Our rash and impious owlet host;
Who, by their stupid rapture, rais'd
Too near the power they had debas'd,
And, blinded by his rushing rays,
Grop'd to their holes, in dire amaze.
Poor jealous, envious, nateful spirit,
By virtue sham'd, and stung by merit,
Thy baseness in the picture trace,
Which here before thy view I place!
If, in the life of purest die,
One passing speck attract thine eye,

Though mere misfortune cause the stain.
Unjust disgrace, or teazing pain,
All is a plea for spiteful rage
To blast the hero or the sage;
This, while he opes his country's eyes;
And that, while in its cause he dies.
But, thanks to Heaven, the shafts of spite
Are feebly slung; its triumphs slight.
The stars their circles run in peace;
In one short hour eclipses cease;
The owl withdraws; the sun divine
Shines forth, and shall for ever shine.

THE HARE, THE EAGLE, THE HORNET, AND JUPITER.

A HARE, being pursued by an eagle, retreated into the nest of a hornet. The eagle repulsed the hornet, and destroyed the hare. The hornet traced out the nest of the eagle, and demolished her eggs. The next time, the eagle built her nest higher, but the hornet still pursued, and again destroyed them. The third time, the eagle soared and deposited her eggs between the knees of Jupiter, invoking his protection. The hornet, composing a ball of dirt, dropped it into Jupiter's lap, who forgetting the eggs, shook all off together. Being informed by the hornet that this was in revenge for a former injury, he endeavoured to reconcile them, lest the progeny of his favourite bird should be destroyed: the hornet persisting, he respited the hatching of the egg till the time when the hornets sally forth.

Power is always prone to take revenge, and triumph over the unfortunate. Retaliation generally succeeds, and the most powerful are frequently annoyed for their acts of injustice. This Fable Æsop addresses to the Delphians, while they were dragging him to a precipice; but though he held out to them that Jupiter would avenge his fall, and that they should dearly suffer for their inhumanity, they still persevered in dooming him to death.

THE GNAT AND THE BULL.

A CONCEITED gnat, fully persuaded of his own importance, having placed himself on the horn of a bull, expressed great uneasiness lest his weight should be incommodious; and with much ceremony begged the bull's pardon for the liberty he had taken; assuring him he would immediately remove if he pressed too hard upon him. "Give yourself no uneasiness on that account," replied the bull. "I beseech you; for as I never perceived when you sate down, I shall probably not miss you whenever you think fit to rise."

THE FROGS DEMANDING A KING.

Of democratic squabbles tir'd,
As with one mind and voice inspir'd,
The frogs of Jove a king desir'd
With hoarse, loud cries.
Such being the universal bent,
The God, to give their hearts content,
A mild, pacific monarch sent
Down from the skies.

Great Jove's assent had made them cheerful,
Yet are the frogs a nation fearful:
And as their lake was now not near full,
The king had grounded.
His entry made a monstrous splash,
Not one bold frog appear'd so rash
As not to dread a general smash,
And fly astounded!

Thus sudden fright to joy succeeds;
Some sought the deep, and some the reeds
And some the thick entangled weeds,
So much they fear him.—
'Twas a huge log!—he seem'd asleep—
One curious hero dar'd to peep,
Soon others follow'd, just like sheep,
And ventur'd near him.

The gentle monarch lay so quiet,
Round him at length was held a diet;
Where croaking all with clam'rous riot,
And nothing slack,
To shew contempt they all began;
Each to insult his sovereign ran:
The basest coward of the clan
Leap'd on his back!

Now with vociferating noise
To Jove again they raise their voice,
Begging he'll make a better choice
Than he has done;
"Our wooden king may have some merit,
As Jove's high gift we must infer it;
But what we want is fire and spirit,
King Log has none!"

Great Jupiter then sent a crane,
Who did not bear his pow'r in vain :
Each day some scores of subjects slain
Now met their fate.
Much as they wished an active stirrer,
The restless wretches found their error,
And longed to change this reign of terror,
But 'twas too late.

THE ADVANTAGE OF SCIENCE.

In the olden time, in a certain town, there occurred a difference between two citizens, one of whom was poor but clever, the other rich but ignorant. The latter endeavoured to obtain an advantage over his rival; thinking that every wise man ought to be obliged to honour him. He was foolish enough to suppose that good fortune, whether accompanied with merit or not, deserved to be venerated. "My friend," said he to the sage, "you seem to hold yourself in high estimation; but tell me, do you not associate with those who always lodge on the third floor, and dress in June and December alike? The republic has always most trouble and concern with the poor and dependent. The rich and independent, who think nothing of the mere common necessaries of life, by indulging in luxuries, employ the artificer and the tradesman, while you devote yourself to persons who think they are gentlemen, merely because they read vicious books and trashy plays." These impertinent observations met with the retort they deserved. The learned man did not rebut the silly insult with hostile or scornful expressions; but achieved a complete victory over his antagonist with the passive indignation of satire. After this encounter they both quitted the town. The rich man, who was conceited and imperious, was shunned and despised wherever he went; but the learned man was admired and respected.

Fools may seek to indemnify themselves by talking; but knowledge alone is universally prized.

THE ASS AND HIS MASTER.

A diligent ass, daily loaded beyond his strength by a severe master whom he had long served, and who kept him on very short commons, happened one day in his old age to be oppressed with a more than ordinary burthen of earthen-ware. His strength being much impaired, and the road deep and uneven, he unfortunately slipped; and, unable to recover himself, fell down, and broke all the vessels to pieces. His master, transported with rage, began to beat him most unmercifully. Against whom the poor ass, lifting up his head as he lay on the ground, thus strongly remonstrated; "Unfeeling wretch! to thy own avaricious cruelty, in first pinching me of food, and then loading me beyond my strength, thou owest the misfortune which thou so unjustly imputest to me."

THE SCULPTOR AND THE CHEMIST.

A SCULPTOR once, in friendly talk,
Partook a chemist's morning walk.
With these 'tis easy to suppose
What topics of discourse arose;
For rarely is an artist known
To speak but of his art alone.
Thus did the tube-inspirer praise,
In pompous and fatiguing phrase,
The magic power of his matrass,*
His crucible, † his fiery gas;
While like a zealot he display'd
How, by phlogiston's ‡ subtile aid,
He Nature's boldest steps could follow,
And, stranger yet, outstrip her hollow;
Rejecting her inactive gait,
For means as sure and swift as fate.
Thence haughty madness, mounting higher
With copper, mercury and fire,
Thought the Creator's rights to take,
And mend his laws, or better make.
The humbler sculptor's guarded boast
No heavenly attributes engross'd;
These he rever'd, nor dar'd to aim
At aught which bore creation's name.
"Behold," said he, "the sculptor's object,
'Tis first a happy choice of subject;
Next, of materials to express
The chosen subject with success.
These to the chisel we resign,
And prune and polish, slow and fine,
Till, shap'd at length, the block we find
Reflect the image in our mind.
Here lies the art—our tool to stay
From cutting useful knobs away:
And hence the sculptor's ablest hand
Is that which can itself command,
Nor dare to break, with pedant pride,
The rules of our respected guide:
Fair Nature she—the sculptor's part,
The end, the aim of all his art

* An earthen vessel with a long neck, used in chemistry.
† Another earthen vessel, which chemists use in their experiments with metals.
‡ A word, derived from the Greek, which signifies the principal of inflammability.

Is to unfold, in every work,
Charms that in Nature's bosom lurk!"
Here clos'd the artist's conversation:
And, were I sovereign of a nation,
The moral of the tale should be
To issue my supreme decree
That every tutor—every school
Should follow close the sculptor's rule.

JUPITER AND THE HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN, missing a young heifer that belonged to his herd, went up and down the forest to seek it; and having walked a great deal of ground to no purpose, he commenced praying to Jupiter for relief, promising to sacrifice a kid to him if he would help him to a discovery of the thief. After this he went on a little further, and came near a grove of oaks, where he found the carcase of his heifer, and a lion grumbling over and feeding upon it. This sight almost scared him out of his wits; so down he fell upon his knees once more, and addressed himself to Jupiter; "O Jupiter," said he, "I promised thee a kid to shew me the thief, but now I promise thee a bull, if thou wilt be so merciful as to deliver me out of his clutches."

How ignorant and stupid are some people who form their notions of the Supreme Being from their own poor, shallow conceptions: and then like froward children with their nurses, think it consistent with infinite wisdom, and unerring justice, to comply with all their whimsical petitions. Let men but live as justly as they can, and just Providence will give them what they ought to have. Of all the involuntary sins which men commit, scarce any are more frequent than that of their praying absurdly and improperly, as well as unseasonably, when their time might have been employed so much better. The many private collections sold up and down the nation, do not a little contribute to this injudicious practice; which is the more to be condemned, in that we have so incomparable a public Liturgy; one single address whereof (except the Lord's Prayer), may be pronounced the best that ever was compiled, and alone preferable to all the various manuals of occasional devotion, which are vended by hawkers and pedlars about our streets. It is as follows:—

"Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowing our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, we beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities, and those things, which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us, for the worthiness of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

THE WOODCUTTER AND THE CUCKOO.

A WOODCUTTER was busily employed in erecting a habitation for his family. "Simpleton!" said the cuckoo, "how much useless trouble you take to prepare a house. The first empty nest I can find, always serves me for a residence."—"I thank you master cuckoo," replied the woodman. "for your counsel. You have no interest in your home; but labour renders the possession of mine more sweet and independent."

THE FEMALE SOOTHSAYERS.

Opinions are often formed by accident; and it is accident which always sets the fashion; in support of this assertion, innumerable instances can be adduced.

A woman at Paris, set up for a soothsayer: and was soon consulted on every occasion; if a dish-clout were lost, if one had a lover, or a faithless husband, a cross-grained mamma, or a jealous wife; a visit was immediately paid to the wise woman. Her stock in trade consisted of a good address, a few scientific terms, considerable effrontery, aided now and then by an accidental fulfilment of one of her predictions; all this concurred to close the eyes of her dupes, and made them often look upon these effects of chance as miracles. In fact, although ignorant as a magpie, she passed for an oracle. The prophetess was lodged in an attic: and without further resource, this woman managed to fill her purse in such manner, that she bought a title for her husband, purchased a conveniently situated office, and a dwelling-house. The attic was soon filled with a new tenant, to whom the whole town repaired as formerly; wives, daughters, valets, statesmen, in fact, every one who desired to be made acquainted with Fate's intention towards himself. The garret became the Sybil's temple. The other female had already brought customers enough to the place. The last comer in vain protested that she could not prophesy. "I foretell events," said she, "you are making a jest of me: why, gentlemen I can't read; and never learnt aught but my pater-noster." These arguments were of no weight, she must of necessity phrophesy, inspired by the the chinking of good ducats: and in spite of herself, gained more than any two barristers in full practice. The furniture of her residence was of great assistance: four ricketty stools, and a broom-handle, gave clear testimony of her attendance at the nocturnal meetings of the witches.

If this woman had prophesied correctly in a tapestried chamber, she would have been ridiculed: fashion demanded her location in an attic: it looked more genuine. The other woman had no company, and was therefore forced to be contented with dancing attendance upon herself.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE BULLFINCH.

A nightingale and a bullfinch occupied two cages in the same apartment. The nightingale perpetually varied her song, and every effort she made afforded fresh entertainment. The bullfinch always whistled the same dull tune that he had learnt, till all the family grew weary of the disgustful repetition. "What is the reason," said the bullfinch one day to his neighbour, "that your songs are always heard with peculiar attention, while mine, I observe, are almost as wholly disregarded?"—"The reason," replied the nightingale, "is obvious: your audience are sufficiently acquainted with every tone you have been taught, and they know your natural abilities too well to expect anything new from that quarter. How then can you suppose they will listen to a songster, from whom nothing native or original is to be expected?"

THE SPARROW AND THE NIGHTINGALE

Tho' wondrous great is learning's store,
Labour each day adds something more;
Science, rejoiced her hoard may view,
Yet time to her brings something new;
Nor is there one whose ample mind,
Howe'er enlarg'd,—howe'er refin'd,—
Tho' toil and knowledge gifts impart—
Can perfect any work of art.
Yet some in their own judgment wise,
As they advance in life, despise
Those, who their minds presume to teach,
Conceiving nought above their reach!
While they to learning ne'er apply,
But blockheads live and blockheads die.—
Ye then who pant for useful knowledge,
In war, on travel, or at college,
Oh! never, through excess of pride,
Presume instruction to deride—
Children and fools may teachers spurn,
But wisdom's ne'er too old to learn.—
As once an organ's sprightly sound,
Delighted all the village round.
A nightingale, that charm'd the plain,
Follow'd well pleas'd, the dulcet strain,
And as the warbler pour'd her throat
Responsive to the minstrel's note,
A sparrow, who had heard the lay,
Attentive on her osier spray,
Her rude imperious haunts among,
Thus criticised th' enchantress' song.
"It moves my wonder and surprise
That you, a bird so learn'd and wise,
Who far more qualities can boast
Than any of the feathered host,
Should deign a lesson to receive
From one to whom you knowledge give;
For all that tasteful melody
Yon minstrel makes—he learnt from thee;
From thee, whose strains the live-long night
Pale melancholy oft delight."—
To whom devoid of empty pride,
The tuneful nightingale replied:—
"Good friend, if to my wood-notes clear
Man lends a due observant ear,

Or marks a turn, or steals a grace,
His talents soon the loss replace;
For as, enamour'd of my lays,
Attention to my notes he pays,
Observes the changes in my strain,
Improv'd I hear them sung again,
And find, corrected by his art,
Superior transport they impart:—
And soon, by music taught, I'll prove
To all the songsters of the grove,
No bird unskill'd, however fine,
Shall boast so sweet a lay as mine."

THE PRESUMPTION OF YOUTH.

THE young people of Athens, amazed at the glory of Themistocles, of Cimon, of Pericles, and full of a foolish ambition, after having received some lessons from the sophists who promised to render them very great politicians, believed themselves capable of everything, and aspired to fill the highest places. One of them named Glaucon, took it so strongly in head that he had a peculiar genius for public affairs, although he was not yet twenty years of age, that no person in his family, nor among his friends, had the power to divert him from a notion so little befitting his age and capacity. Socrates who liked him on account of Plato his brother, was the only one who succeeded in making him change his resolution. Meeting him one day, he accosted him with so dexterous a discourse that he induced him to listen. He had already gained much influence over him. "You have a desire to govern the republic?" said Socrates. "True," replied Glaucon. "You cannot have a finer design," replied the philosopher, "since if you succeed in it, you will be in a state to serve your friends, to enlarge your house, and to extend the limits of your native country. You will become known not only in Athens, but through all Greece; and it may be that your renown will reach even to the barbarous nations, like that of Themistocles. At last you will gain the respect and admiration of every body." A beginning so flattering pleased the young man exceedingly, and he very willingly continued the conversation. "Since you desire to make yourself esteemed and respected, it is clear that you think to render yourself useful to the public."—"Assuredly."—"Tell me then, I beseech you, what is the first service that you intend to render the state?" As Glaucon appeared to be perplexed, and considered what he ought to answer. "Probably," replied Socrates, "it will be to enrich the republic, that is to say to increase its revenues."—"Exactly so."—"And, undoubtedly, you know in what the revenues of the state consist, and the extent to which they may be increased. You will not have failed to make it a private study, to the end that if one source should suddenly fail, you may be able to supply its place immediately with another."—"I assure you," answered Glaucon, "that this is what I have never thought of."—"Tell me at least then the necessary expences of maintaining the republic. You cannot fail to

know of what importance it is to retrench those which are superfluous."—"I confess to you that I am not more instructed with regard to this article than the other."—"Then it is necessary to defer till another time the design that you have of enriching the republic; for it is impossible for you to benefit the state while you are ignorant of its revenues and expences."—"But," said Glaucon, "there is still another means that you pass over in silence, one can enrich a state by the ruin of its enemies."—"You are right," replied Socrates; "but in order to do that you must be the more powerful; otherwise you run the risk of losing that which you possess. So he who speaks of undertaking a war ought to know the power of both parties, to the end that if he finds his party the strongest, he may boldly risk the adventure; but if he find it the weakest, he should dissuade the people from undertaking it. But do you know what are the forces of our republic, by sea and by land, and what are those of our enemies? have you a statement of them in writing? You will do me the pleasure to allow me a perusal of it."—"I have none yet," replied Glaucon. "I see well," said Socrates, "that we shall not make war so soon if they entrust you with the government, for there remain many things for you to know, and many cares to take."

The sage mentioned many other articles, not less important, in which he found Glaucon equally inexperienced; and he pointed out how ridiculous they render themselves who have the rashness to intermeddle with government, without bringing any other preparation to the task than a great degree of self-esteem and excessive ambition. "Fear, my dear Glaucon," said Socrates, "fear lest a too ardent desire for honours should blind you; and cause you to take a part that would cover you with shame, in bringing to light your incapacity, and want of talent."

The youth was wise enough to profit by the good advice of his instructor, and took some time to gain private information, before he ventured to appear in public.

This lesson is for all ages, and it may be able to suit many persons of every state and every condition.

THE FOX IN THE WELL.

A fox, having fallen into a well, made a shift, by sticking his claws into the sides, to keep his head above water. Soon after, a wolf came and peeped over the brink, to whom the fox applied himself very earnestly for assistance, entreating that he would help him to a rope, or something of that kind, which might favour his escape. The wolf, moved with compassion at his misfortune, could not forbear expressing his concern:—"Ah! poor Renard," said he, "I am sorry for you with all my heart: how could you possibly come into this melancholy condition?"—"Nay, prithee, friend,' replied the fox, "if you wish me well, do not stand pitying me, but lend me some succour as far as you can: for pity is but cold comfort when one is up to the chin in water, and within a hair's breadth of starving or drowning."

Pity, indeed, is of itself but poor comfort at any time, and unless it produces something more substantial, is rather impertinently troublesome than any way agreeable. To stand bemoaning the misfortunes of our friends, without offering some expedient to alleviate them, is only echoing to their grief, and putting them in mind that they are miserable. A favour or obligation is doubled by being well timed; and he is the best benefactor, who knows our necessities, and complies with our wishes, even before we ask him.



THE SICK LION.

THE SICK LION.

A PRINCELY lion, worn with age,
No longer active war could wage,
Or malcontents keep duly under;—
Close in his den retir'd, alone,
His roar now dwindled to a groan,
Which erst rous'd echo with its thunder.

Soon through the forest wide 'twas known
The monarch totter'd on his throne,
For, now his strength and vigour fail him;
The wolf's sharp tooth, the bull's strong horn,
The stag's rough antlers strike in scorn,
The horse's rebel hoofs assail him.

At last the stupid ass appears,
With harsh shrill voice, and flapping ears,
His base insulting heels up-rearing.
"Oh! let me now resign my breath,"
The lion cries, "far worse than death,
This final blow is past all bearing!"

THE HUSBANDMAN AND ASSES.

A CERTAIN husbandman was growing aged, who having never beheld the city, desired his servants to convey him thither, that he might see it before he died. As he went, he was overtaken by a violent storm and gloomy darkness, so that the asses which drew the carriage, mistook their way, and guided him to a precipice, where, being upon the verge of approaching ruin, he thus exclaimed, "Oh Jove! what injury have I committed, that hath incensed thee to cause this misfortune, especially that I should owe my death, not to generous horses, nor active mules, but to dull and despicable asses."

That man is indeed unfortunate who is under the control or guidance of the ignorant, who, when difficulties arise, have neither prudence nor ability to guide and extricate him. This was Æsop's last Fable, addressed to the Delphians while in the act of throwing him down the precipice, and his last words are a further illustration of it:—"It is my unhappy fate to fall, not by the hands of persons of worth and abilities, but by those of the vilest and most despicable of men."

The predictions held out in former fables were soon after fulfilled; for a destructive pestilence having raged among them, they were told by the oracle, that it was the expiation of Æsop's sad catastrophe. In order, therefore, to avert the further consequences of the judgment, they erected a pompous monument over his bones. When the principals of Greece, and the sages were informed of the melancholy end of Æsop, and by an examination of the facts had considered the injustice of his accusation, they were resolved to revenge the wanton effusion of his innocent blood, which they did with the utmost severity.

FATHER AND SON.

When Solyman sat upon the throne of Persia, there lived a peasant named Hamet, who was born in extreme poverty, and by the most assiduous labour, could scarcely earn sufficient for his own and his aged father's subsistence. This did not prevent him from marrying the young and lovely Ismena; to whom he confided the care of his parent, and the humble habitation in which they resided. After the fatigues of the day he returned to his humble cot, and spending a happy evening in the bosom of his family, divided with them the produce of his toils, Ismena ere long presented her husband with a son. In the midst of the joy occasioned by his birth, Hamet reflected on the poverty to which his infant was heir. He had never hitherto known what it was to be discontented, nor even then would he have murmured against his fortune, but that he wished his child a happier lot. He fancied it was incumbent on him to acquire some portion of independence; but, with his small earnings, how could independence be purchased?

Whilst Hamet was employed with these ideas, his thoughts suddenly reverted to his father, who was enfeebled by age, and rendered incapable of contributing to his own support. For the first time he regarded him as an incumbrance, and conceived that he alone prevented him from acquiring riches. He now only saw in him an infirm and troublesome old man, continually complaining, and exacting the most tiresome attentions: for he no longer remembered that he had a right to exact them.

The munificence and humanity of the predecessors of Solyman had founded public asylums for indigent old age. The riches of these hospitable buildings were converted to every other purpose than the relief of the poor, Avarice had applied to its own uses the treasures destined for charity; and the unfortunate beings who were obliged to seek refuge in these abodes, entered them with fear and trembling, lest the treatment they should experience would abridge their melancholy days. To so great an extent had the charities been abused, that their reformation was at last undertaken by the Sultan in person.

Hamet, who had never passed these miserable retreats without shuddering, now recollected that they were open to his father. Eager to be free from the expence and trouble of supporting his aged parent, and vexed at some of the whims and caprices, which generally accompany old age and infirmity, he announced to him that they must separate.

The old man sighed; a tear trickled down his cheek; he arose from his seat and being unable to walk, was borne on the shoulders of his son towards the asylum. The road being long and broken, he was obliged to rest by the way, and having deposited his burthen in the corner of a street, he sat down to take breath.

The old man groaned piteously, and shed abundance of tears. Suddenly he ceased, and appeared during some moments, lost in profound meditation. In a short time he leaned towards his son, and embracing him, said, "I pardon thee, my son, I have merited this treatment. I receive it as a chastisement from Heaven. The Almighty sees into our hearts, and our most secret movements are known to Him. He keeps an exact register of our actions, and, in time, either

recompenses or punishes them. It is now forty-five years, my son, since I conducted your grandfather into the same asylum to which you are now conveying me I have been ungrateful! you have become so! and perhaps your son will be the same! We have both learned and acted upon the same lesson, and the effects of it will be visited upon us by the retributive justice of Heaven in the inhumanity of our children. What I have been to my father, thou hast been to thine, and so will thy son be to thee. Heaven is just, let us not murmur at its will.

Hamet listened to the old man with astonishment and delight;—a ray of hope flashed across his soul; he made no reply, but placing his aged sire on his back, returned with him to his home. The project he had formed filled him with horror, and he ever after testified his repentance by redoubled care, attention, and tenderness. The old man dwelt but a few years on earth, and died happy in the home of his childhood.

THE ZOOLOGIST AND THE WEASELS.

Upon a garden's sunny side,
A sage zoologist espied
Two weasels once, he seized the prize,
And bore them home t' anatomize.
One that was plump (for one was slim),
He takes and slaughters, limb by limb;
The microscope he next applies,
He views the legs, the tail, the eyes:
Looks o'er each part, without—within—
Head, back, intestines, belly, skin;
He takes his pen, then looks once more,
Writes a few lines and reads them o'er,
And when his notes are full and plain,
Turns to the butchery again.
While yet his zeal is quite alive,
Some virtuoso friends arrive,
To whom he shews what he has written,
Some are with admiration smitten—
Some hear with coldness his reflections—
Some question—others raise objections.
  Th' anatomizing mania over,
At length began he to discover
He'd had enough of weasels, so
He let the slim survivor go.
Soon as her ancient haunts she found,
The neighbours all came flocking round,
And she proceeded to declare,
The whole unheard and strange affair.

"There's not a doubt," (she thus went on),
"With my own eyes I saw it done,
I did the man a whole day mark, as
He bent o'er our poor friend's carcase.
Who calls us reptile now?—how long
Shall we submit to such a wrong,
When we have qualities inviting
Such eager search, such careful writing?—
My noble brethren—give not way!
They know our worth whate'er they say."
And miserable authors, who
Are treated so, will think so too.
Whom too much honour does befall
If they are criticised at all.
A superficial view and slight,
Befits the nonsense that they write;
To make much fuss about a weasel
But gives encouragement to these ill-
Minded things to shout away,
"They know our worth whate'er they say."

THE BEE AND THE HORNET.

A HORNET once regarding the bee at her industrious occupations, exclaimed "Humph!—what is the use of so much nicety and mechanical precision in forming this hive?—What a formal and slow occupation yours is!—The time you waste in this needless regularity might have been employed to a better purpose." —"Do not interrupt me my friend," answered the bee; "though irregularity seems to promote despatch, in the end it is sure to retard business; for his work is half done who proceeds in it methodically."

THE OSTRICH AND THE BIRDS.

AT a convocation of birds, a report was suddenly spread, that a stranger had entered, who called himself an ostrich, from Africa; upon which two were deputed to ascertain who he was. The ostrich took this in ill part, and asked them, angrily, if they could have any doubt that he belonged to their species, since he bore wings. To which they replied, that it was necessary he should convince them he could fly, before he took rank among them. Displeased, he took his leave, and repaired to an assembly of beasts, who, in turn, rejected him on account of his wings.

The liveries and escutcheons of the great add nothing to their fame, if their actions class them with the vulgar.

THE DOG AND THE CAT.

A DOG that had been sold by his master, broke his chain, and returned to the house where he had been born. Judge his surprise, when, as a reward for his zeal, he was soundly beaten, and taken back to his new residence. An old cat of his acquaintance, observing his extreme surprise, said to him: "Poor fool! did you imagine that we were prized for our own sakes?"

THE MERCHANT AND FORTUNE.

A MERCHANT had the good fortune to acquire immense wealth in many a voyage; all his cargoes escaped, without paying toll either to whirlpools, rocks or sand-banks. Fate allowed him to pass free. Neptune never failed of exacting his rights from his fellow traders, whilst Fortune always took care to bring our merchant safely into port. Those he employed, were all faithful to his interests; he had always a market for his sugar, tobacco, cinnamon, in fact for whatever he imported. Luxury and folly swelled his treasure, in a word, wealth was showered upon him. He was not to be spoken with, but through the medium of hard ducats; he possessed dogs, horses, carriages; and throughout the year fared like a prince. A bosom friend observing his splendid repasts, said to him; "How do you manage to fare so sumptuously?"—"How?" replied the merchant, "undoubtedly from my knowledge of business. I am indebted for it to no one but myself: to my prudence, my skill in speculating advantageously, and laying out my money in a proper manner."

Profit appearing to him a very agreeable thing, he again risked the wealth he had acquired; but this time, everything went against him, and chiefly through his own imprudence. A vessel too heavily freighted, perished in the first storm. Another, unprovided with the necessary means of defence, fell into the hands of corsairs; a third, arriving safely in port, was unable to dispose of any portion of her merchandise; luxury and folly had no further occasion for the stores wherewith she was laden. In addition to this, his brokers cheated him, and his wealth being vested in different ways, left him unprovided for contingencies, so that he suddenly found himself greatly impoverished.

His friend observing his reduced style of living, enquired the cause. "Alas!" he replied, "it is cruel Fortune who has played me this prank."—

In a like case, every one imputes his success to his own industry; but if his imprudence meets with the natural result, he abuses Fate. He is invariably right, Fortune always wrong.

THE WOLVES AND THE LAMB.

A LAMB once beheld two wolves fighting with the greatest animosity. Full of compassion, it drew near them, and endeavoured with gentle and impressive arguments to assuage their rancorous dispositions, and restore mutual harmony. This object it at length accomplished; but no sooner were the wolves reconciled, than they resolve to divide the innocent peace-maker between them.

THE MASTIFF AND THE LITTLE DOGS.

A MASTIFF, full of youth and vigour,
Excelling all in strength and figure,
Once, at a village where he halted,
Was by a turnspit mob assaulted.
Think what a racket, bustling, howling,
Confusion, clamour, barking, growling!
Nor ceas'd they, through the town's extent,
Our harmless traveller to torment;
These wretched whelpers little knew
What kindness to a guest is due.
For every stranger is a brother,
Since Nature is our common mother,
From this near kindred, I suppose,
The right to aliens' goods arose.
Would Heaven 'twere with the dogs alone
Th' inhospitable right were known!
'Tis but the triumph of the strong;
The right of rapine—right of wrong.
Like tyrants rav'd the mongrel brood;
And, had they been as brave as rude,
Our hero must have fall'n a prey;
Who through the storm, urg'd on his way,
With pace unquicken'd, head unturn'd,
Unruffled still and unconcern'd.
This noble creature claims applause,
"One snap," he said, "of my wide jaws;
One brush from me— one hostile blow,
Were deadly to so weak a foe."
Ye valiant, deeds of vengeance shun,
Lest vengeance to excess should run!

THE MOLE IN SPECTACLES.

An author of acknowledged talent should never be mortified at seeing his works thrown aside by men of no taste nor learning. There is a kind of heaviness and ignorance that hangs upon the mind of ordinary men, which is too thick for knowledge to break through. Their souls are not to be enlightened. To these may be applied the following.

A young mole, after having consulted many oculists for the bettering of his sight, was at last provided with a good pair of spectacles; but upon his endeavouring to make use of them, his mother told him very prudently, that spectacles, though they might help the eye of a man, could be of no service to a mole.

THE SERPENT AND THE FROGS.

A SERPENT once became old and feeble, and no longer able to hunt abroad for his food. In this unfortunate condition he bewailed in solitude the infirmities of age, and wished in vain for the strength of his youthful years. Hunger at length, however, taught him, instead of his lamentations, a stratagem to get his livelihood. He went slowly on to the brink of a ditch, in which there lived an infinite number of frogs, that had just then elected a king to rule over them. Arrived at this scene of delight, the wily serpent seemed to be very sad, and extremely sick; upon which a frog popped up his head, and asked him what he ailed. "I am ready to starve," answered the serpent: "formerly I lived upon the creatures of your species which I was able to take, but now I am so unfortunate that I cannot catch anything to subsist on." The frog on this account, went and informed the king, of the serpent's condition, and his answer to the question he asked him. Upon which report, the king went himself to the place to look upon the serpent, who seeing him, "Sir," said he, "one day as I was going to snap a frog by the foot, he got from me, and fled before me to a certain dervise's apartment, and their entered into a dark chamber, in which there lay a little infant asleep. At the same time I also entered in pursuit of my game, and feeling the child's foot, which I took for the frog, I bit it in such a venomous manner that the infant immediately died. The dervise, on this, provoked by my boldness, pursued me with all his might; but not being able to overtake me, he fell upon his knees, and begged of Heaven, for the punishment of my crime, that I might never be able to catch frogs more, but that I might perish with hunger, unless their king gave me one or two in charity; and, lastly, he added to his wishes, that I might be their slave and obey them. These prayers of the dervise," continued the serpent, "were heard; and I am now come, since it is the will of Heaven, to submit myself to your laws, and obey your orders as long as I live."

The king of the frogs received his submissive enemy, with an acceptance of his services; but, at the same time, it was with great disdain and swelling pride that he told him, with a haughty taunt, that he would not disobey the Heavens, but would make use of his service: and, accordingly, the serpent got into employment and for some days carried the king upon his back: but, at length, "Most potent monarch," said he, "if you intend that I should serve you long, you must feed me, else I shall starve to death."—"Thou sayest very true, honest serpent," replied the king of the frogs; "henceforward I allow thee to swallow two of my subjects a day for thy subsistence." This was all he had to wish for. Thus the serpent, by submitting to his enemy, secured to himself, at the cost of the frogs, a comfortable subsistence during the remainder of his life.

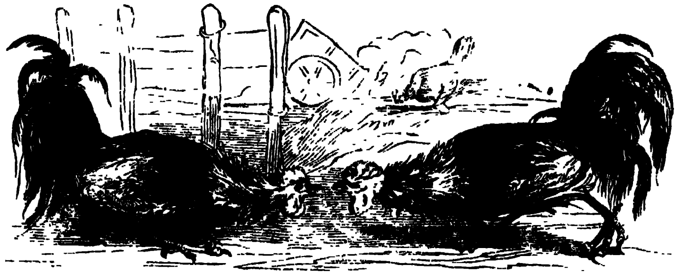
THE COCK AND HIS MASTER.

A COCK was loudly chaunting forth his vigilance, courage, beauty of plumage, and other qualifications. His master, who heard this exultation, smiled and said nothing. The cock was offended, and said, "Why do you laugh?—have I said anything that is untrue?"—"Not so," replied the master; "but I fear that very few will give you credit for these things. True merit always leaves its eulogium to others; while self-praise is ever suspected."

THE BAND, THE BOB-WIG AND THE FEATHER.

A BAND, a bob-wig, and a feather,
Attack'd a lady's heart together.
The band, in a most learned plea,
Made up of deep philosophy,
Told her, if she would please to wed
A reverend beard, and take, instead
 Of vigorous youth,
 Old solemn Truth,
With books and morals, to her bed,
 How happy she would be.
The Bob he talked of management,
What wondrous blessings Heaven sent,
Of care, and pains, and industry;
And truly he must be so free
To own, he thought your airy beaux,
With powdered wigs, and dancing shoes,
Were good for nothing—mend his soul!—
Except to prate and play the fool.
 He said 'twas wealth gave joy and mirth;
And that, to be the dearest wife
Of one who laboured all his life
To make a mine of gold his own,
And not spend sixpence when he'd done,
 Was Heaven upon Earth.
When these two blades had done, d'ye see,
The feather, as it might be me,
Steps out, Sir, from behind the screen,
With such an air, and such a mien,—
Look you, old gentleman,—in short,
He quickly spoiled the statesman's sport.
 It proved such sunshine weather,
That, you must know, at the first beck,
The lady leaped about his neck,
 And off they went together!


BOOK IV



F A B·L E'S.

BOOK IV.

THE HORSE AND THE COLT.



NACQUAINTED with the iron sway of tyrant man, lived a venerable horse, who had been left a widowe , with an only son; he reared him in a meadow, where the streams, the flowers, and the inviting shade, offered at once all that was requisite for happiness. Abusing these enjoyments, as is customary with youth, the colt stuffed himself every day with clover, fooled away the time on the flowery plain, galloped about without an object, bathed without requiring it, or rested himself without being fatigued. Lazy, and fat, the young hermit grew weary, and became tired of wanting for nothing; disgust soon followed; and seeking his father he said to him: "For some time I have been unwell, this grass is unwholesome, and kills me; this clover is without smell, this water is muddy, the air we breathe here, attacks my lungs; in short, I shall die unless we leave it."—"Since it concerns your life, my dear son," replied his parent, "we will instantly take our departure." No sooner said than done: the two immediately set off in search of a new home.

The young traveller neighed for joy; the old one less merry, went at a sedate pace, taking the lead, and made his child clamber up steep and arid mountains, without a tuft of herbage, and where there was nothing which could afford them the least nourishment. Evening came, but there was no pasturage; and our travellers were fain to go to bed supperless. The next day, when nearly exhausted

by hunger, they were glad of a few stunted briars. This time there was no gallopping on the part of the colt; and after two days, he could scarcely drag one leg after the other.

Considering the lesson sufficient, the father returned by a road unknown to his son, and reconducted him to his meadow in the middle of the night. As soon as our colt discovered a little fresh grass, he attacked it with avidity. "Oh! what a delicious banquet! What beautiful grass!" he exclaimed: "was there ever anything so sweet and tender? My father, we will seek no further, let us take up our abode for ever in this lovely spot: what country can equal this rural asylum?"

As he thus spoke, day began to break; and the colt recognizing the meadow he had so lately quitted; cast down his eyes in the greatest confusion.

His father mildly said to him: "My dear child, in future remember this maxim; 'he who enjoys too much, is soon disgusted with pleasure; to be happy, one must be moderate.'"

THE DYING ATHEIST,

An atheistical author, being dangerously ill, desired the assistance of a neighbouring curate; and confessed to him with great contrition, that nothing sat more heavy at his heart, than the sense of his having seduced the age by his writings, and that their evil influence was likely to continue even after his death.

The curate upon further examination, finding the penitent in the utmost agonies of despair, and being himself a man of learning, told him, that he hoped his case was not so dangerous as he apprehended, since he found that he was so very sensible of his fault, and so sincerely repented it. The penitent still urged the evil tendency of his book to subvert all religion, and the little ground of hope there could be for one whose writings would continue to do mischief when his body was laid in ashes. The curate finding no other way to comfort him, told him, that he did well in being afflicted for the evil design with which he published his book; but that he ought to be very thankful that there was no danger of its doing any hurt: that his cause was so very bad, and his arguments so weak that he did not apprehend any ill effects from it; in short, that he might rest satisfied his book could do no more mischief after his death, than it had done whilst he was living. To which he added, for his further satisfaction, that he did not believe any besides his particular friends and acquaintance had ever been at the pains of reading it, or that anybody after his death would ever enquire for it. The dying man had still so much the frailty of an author in him, as to be cut to the heart with these consolations; and without answering the good man, asked his friends about him, with a peevishness that is natural to a sick person, where they had picked up such a blockhead? and whether they thought him a proper person to attend one in his condition?

The curate finding that the author did not expect to be dealt with as a real and sincere penitent, but as a penitent of importance, after a short admonition withdrew.

BOOK IV.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE BEE.

CHANGE is the motto, endless change,
Of those whose feeble mental range
By pastime seeks to kill the day:
—Nor shall I now oppose its sway;
Yet frankly add whoe'er should serve
Some useful purpose must not swerve;
But learn, in this pursuit to feel
His mind absorb'd with steady zeal;
And from the giddy whims abstain
That oft seduce the fickle brain.
Here to my readers I might quote
Philosophers, and names of note;
Might numerous shreds of history tag,
Which I from Memory's store could drag,
On manners, politics and laws,
With powerful weight to aid my cause:
But I my present lessons find
In authors of a different kind,
And here we are about to see
Th' instructive wisdom of a bee.
  She to a sprig of thyme had stuck
From dawn, her nurture thence to suck,
A butterfly, the flow'rets ranging,
His taste and food each moment changing,
Chanc'd, in his flight at eve, to see
Our little persevering bee;
And cried, " You must, I vow by Cupid,
Be wondrous good—or wondrous stupid;
On one insipid flower to stick,
And feed so long—it makes me sick,
When thus my dear, I see you perch'd,
From morn to eve, so dull and starch'd
—' Egad you seem, without a joke,
An oyster, solder'd to a rock;
There still, in sluggish gloom, to dwell,
Without the power to quit its cell!"
  " True, Sir," the modest bee rejoin'd,
" Your simile's just—it suits our kind:
And yet no prurient wish we bear,
Your unproductive joys to share,
Plain useful worth contents our mind,
For which we are by Heaven design'd.
Oysters, in sluggish gloom that lie,
Produce the pearl—and honey I."

THE DERVISE, THE THIEF, AND THE DEVIL.

In the neighbourhood of Babylon, there was once a certain dervise, who lived like a true servant of Heaven; who subsisted only upon such alms as he received; and as for other things, gave himself wholly up to Providence, without troubling his mind with the intrigues of this world.

One of the friends of the dervise one day sent him a fat ox, which a thief seeing as it was led to his hermitage, he resolved to have it, whatever it cost him: with this intent he set forward for the dervise's habitation; but as he went on, he met the devil in the shape of a plain-dressed man, and suspecting by his countenance that he was one of his own stamp, he immediately asked him who he was, and whither he was going? The stranger, on this, made him a short answer to his demand; saying, "I am the devil, who have taken human shape upon me, and I am going to this cave with intent to kill the dervise that lives there; because his example does me a world of mischief, by making several wicked people turn honest and good men: I intend, therefore, to put him out of the way, and then hope to succeed better in my business than I have done of late; else I assure you we shall soon want people in my dominions,"—"Mr. Satan," answered the thief, "I am your most obedient humble servant; I assure you I am one you have no reason to complain about; for I am a notorious robber, and am going to the same place whither you are bent, to steal a fat ox that was a few hours ago given to the dervise that you design to kill."—"My good friend," quoth the devil, "I am heartily glad I have met you, and rejoice that we are both of the same humour, and that both of us design to do this abominable dervise a mischief. Go on and prosper," continued the devil, "and know, when you rob such people as these, you do me a doubly acceptable service."

In the midst of this discourse they came both to the dervise's habitation; night was already well advanced, and the good man had said his usual prayers, and was gone to bed. And now the thief and the devil were both preparing to put their designs in execution; when the thief said to himself, "The devil in going to kill this man will certainly make him cry out, and raise the neighbourhood, which will hinder me from stealing the ox." The devil, on the other hand, reasoned with himself after this manner: "If the thief goes to steal the ox before I have executed my design, the noise he will make in breaking open the door, will waken the dervise, and set him on his guard." Therefore said the devil to the thief, "Let me first kill the dervise, and then thou mayest steal the ox at thy own leisure."—"No," said the thief, "the better way will be for you to stay till I have stolen the ox, and then do you murder the man." But both refusing to give way the one to the other, they quarrelled first, and from words they fell to downright fisty-cuffs. At which sport the devil proving the stronger of the two, the thief called out to the dervise, "Awake, man, arise, here is the devil come to murder you." And on this, the devil perceiving himself discovered, cried out, "Thieves! thieves! look to your ox, dervise." The good man quickly waking at the noise, called in the neighbours, whose presence constrained the thief and the devil to betake themselves to their heels; and the poor dervise saved both his life and his ox.

THE THIEF AND THE BOY.

A BOY sat weeping upon the side of a well: a thief happening to come by just at the same time, asked him why he wept. The boy, sighing and sobbing, replied, the string had broken, and a silver tankard fallen to the bottom of the well. Upon this, the thief pulled off his clothes, and went down into the well to look for it, where, having groped about a good while to no purpose, he came up again, and found neither his clothes nor the boy; the little arch dissembler having run away with them.

THE HOUSE OF CARDS.

A KIND husband, his wife, and two pretty children, lived peacefully in the village where their parents had resided before them. This couple sharing the care of the little household, cultivated their garden, and gathered in their harvests; on summer evenings, supping beneath the green foliage, and in winter before their hearth, they talked to their sons of virtue, wisdom, and of the happiness which these would always procure. The father enlivened his discourse by a story, the mother by a kiss.

The elder of these children, naturally grave and studious, read and reflected incessantly; the younger, merry and active, was always jumping and laughing, and never happy but at play. One evening, according to custom, seated at a table beside their parents, the elder was reading Rollin, the younger, careless about being acquainted with the grand achievements of the Romans and Parthians, was employing all his ingenuity, all his skill, in erecting a fragile house of cards; he scarcely breathed for fear of demolishing it.

The student leaving off for a moment, said, "Father, be so good as to inform me, why certain warriors are called conquerors, and others founders of empires; have these two names a different meaning?" The father was thinking of a proper answer, when his younger son, transported with pleasure, at having, after so much trouble succeeded in building a second story, cried out: "I have done it!" His brother, angry at the noise, with a single blow, destroyed that which it had taken him so long to erect, and made him burst into tears.

"My son," then replied the father, "the founder is your brother, and you are the conqueror."

THE SPIDER AND THE BEE.

ON the leaves and flowers of the same shrub, a spider and a bee pursued their several occupations; the one covering her thighs with honey; the other distending his bag with poison. The spider, as he glanced his eye obliquely at the bee, was ruminating with spleen on the superiority of her productions. "And how happens it," said he, in a peevish tone, "that I am able to collect nothing but poison from the self-same plant that supplies thee with honey? My pains and industry are no less than thine; in those respects we are each indefatigable."—"It proceeds only," replied the bee, "from the different disposition of our nature; mine gives a pleasing flavour to everything I touch, whereas, thine converts to poison, what by a different process had been the purest honey."

THE CAT AND THE OPERA-GLASS.

A WILD cat, who was a great huntsman. in order to banquet at his ease, took up his abode in a young nobleman's park, abounding with rabbits and partridges.

Here this modern Nimrod, hunting day and night, pursued, killed, and devoured both quadrupeds and birds. The keepers soon observed the insolent poacher, but, concealed in a hole in the middle of the wood, the rogue set their skill at defiance.

However, he was afraid he should be caught at last, and complained that old age had rendered his sight less acute. This reflection often grieved him; but one day he found a little hollow tube, furnished at each end with a round piece of glass; it was an opera-glass, which the master had accidentally lost, one evening, in this secluded spot.

The cat at first observing it gravely, touches the machine with his paws, rolling it over and over; soon after, taking hold of his prize, he pulls it to the full extent. and is surprised at seeing nothing come out. At length he applies the glass of the small end to his eye, when he perceives a rabbit browsing beneath a copse, which is imperceptible to his unassisted vision.

"Oh! what a treasure!" he exclaims, embracing his telescope, and running to seize the rabbit, which he fancies is but four steps from him. Hearing a noise, however, he again has recourse to his prize, but, making use of the other end, he perceives a keeper in the distance, coming towards him.

Impelled by fear and hunger, he remains for a moment undecided, hesitates, reflects, then looks again; but the large end always shews him the keeper in the distance, and the small one makes the rabbit appear close to him. Imagining there is sufficient time, he goes to devour the beast; the keeper, who is but twenty paces from him, presents his piece, and lodges a brace of balls in his skull.

Each of us has his opera-glass, which he reverses according to the object: that which he dislikes, he beholds at a distance, while that which he desires is at his elbow.

THE RAIN-DROP.

A LITTLE particle of rain,
That from a passing cloud descended,
Was heard thus idly to complain—
"My brief existence now is ended!
Outcast alike of earth and sky,
Useless to live, unknown to die!"

It chanced to fall into the sea,
And there an open shell received it,
And after years how rich was he
Who from its prison-house relieved it
The drop of rain had formed a gem,
To deck a monarch's diadem.

THE ELEPHANTS AND THE RABBITS.

There happened once a most dreadful year of drought in the elephants' country, called the Isles of Rad, or of the Wind, insomuch that, pressed by extreme thirst, and not being able to come at any water, the whole body of the nation at length publicly addressed themselves to their king, beseeching him to apply some remedy to their misery, that they might not perish, or to destroy them all at once, rather than let them endure a life of so much misery. The king, upon this passionate application, commanded diligent search to be made in all places in the neighbourhood, or at any reasonable distance: and at length there was discovered a spring of water, to which the ancients had given the name of Chaschmanah, or the Fountain of the Moon. Immediately on this most happy discovery, the king came and encamped with his whole army in the parts adjoining to this fountain: but as misfortune would have it, the coming of the elephants ruined a great number of rabbits that had a warren in the same place, because the elephants, every step they took, trod down their burrows, and killed the poor creatures' young ones.

The rabbits on this public calamity, assembled together, went to their king, and besought him to deliver them from this terrible oppression. "I know very well," answered the king, "that I sit upon the throne only for the welfare and ease of my subjects: but, alas! you now ask me a thing that far surpasses my strength." Upon this, one rabbit more cunning than the rest, perceiving the king at a loss, yet very much moved with the affliction of his people, stepped before his companions, and addressing himself to the king, "Sir," said he, "your majesty thinks like a just and generous prince; while the care of our tranquillity disturbs your rest; and while you afford us the freedom to give our advice, it makes me bold to impart to your majesty an invention lately come into my head, to drive these terrible destroyers, the elephants, out of this country. Permit me only," continued the rabbit, "that I may go in the character of your ambassador to the King of the Elephants, and doubt not but I will send away all these strangers faster than they came; neither need your majesty fear that I shall make any improper submissions to them; if any thought of that kind in the least disturbs your majesty's breast, I am willing that your majesty should appoint me a companion, who may at any time return to you, and acquaint you with all that passes in my embassy."

"No," replied the king very obligingly, "go alone and prosper: I will have no spies upon thy actions, for I believe thee faithful. Go, in the name of Heaven, and do what thou shalt deem most convenient: only take care that you always remember that an ambassador is the king's tongue; his discourses therefore ought to be well weighed, and his words and his behaviour noble, and such as would suit the prince himself whom he represents. The most learned in the kingdom ought always to be made choice of for ambassadors. Nay, I have heard that one of the greatest monarchs in the world was wont frequently to disguise himself, and become his own ambassador. Indeed, for the honourable and proper discharge of that employment, three necessary qualities are, resolution, eloquence, and a vast extent of natural parts. A violent spirit, let me tell you, is not for that employment. Several ambassadors, with a rash word, have created trouble in a peaceful kingdom: and others, with a mild and agreeable saying, have reunited irreconcileable enemies." "Sir," said the rabbit, "if I am not endowed with these good qualities your

majesty has enumerated. I will endeavour, at least, to make the best of those I have; and shall ever remember this lesson, which your majesty has honoured me with, and endeavour to act according to what your majesty has so justly declared to be the duty of one in so public and so honourable an employment."

Having so said, he took his leave of the king, and went immediately forward on his journey to the elephants. Before he ventured himself among them, however, he bethought himself that if he went into the crowd that usually attended on their king, he might very likely be trodden to pieces; for which reason he got upon a high tree, from whence he called the King of the Elephants, who was not far off, and addressed him in the following words: "I am," said he, "the moon's ambassador; hear therefore with reverence and attention what I have to say to you in her name. You, who in all ages have been famous for your adorations of my royal mistress, know full well, I doubt not, that the moon is a goddess whose power is unlimited, and that above all things, she hates a lie."

The King of the Elephants, who was a just and a most pious prince, trembled when he heard the rabbit talk of these things, and humbly desired to know the subject of his embassy. "The moon," replied the rabbit, "has sent me hither, to let you understand, that whoever is puffed up with his own grandeur, and despises her little ones, deserves death; and that she is grieved to see that you are not contented only to oppress the little ones, our peaceful and religious nation, but you have the insolence to trouble a fountain consecrated to her deity, where everything is pure. Reform your manners, else you will be severely punished. And if you will not give credit to my words, come and see the moon in her own fountain, and then tremble and retire."

The King of the Elephants was inwardly grieved and astonished at these words, and went to the fountain, wherein he saw the moon indeed, because the water was clear and the moon then shone very brightly. Then said the rabbit to the elephant, "You see the sacred deity; take of the water to wash yourself, and pay your adorations." The elephant very obediently took some of the water, but puddled the fountain with his trunk: at which the rabbit exclaimed, "Infidel, you have profaned the fountain with your unhallowed touch, and behold the goddess is gone away in a passion; retire therefore, I conjure you, speedily, with your whole army, lest some dreadful misfortune befall you." This threatening language set the King of the Elephants trembling, and terrified him to that degree, that he presently commanded his army to decamp; and away they all marched, never to return to the sacred fountain of the moon again. And thus the rabbits were delivered from their enemies by the policy of one of their society.

VICE AND FORTUNE.

FORTUNE and Vice had once a violent contest, as to which of them had it most in her power to make mankind unhappy. Fortune boasted that she could take from men every external good, and bring upon them every external evil. "Be it so," replied Vice, "but this is by no means sufficient to make them miserable without my assistance; whereas, without yours, I am able to render them completely so; nay, in spite too of all your endeavours to make them happy."



THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

A RUMOUR once prevailed, that a neighbouring mountain was in labour; it was affirmed that she had been heard to utter prodigious groans; and a general expectation had been raised, that some extraordinary birth was at hand. Multitudes flocked with much eagerness to be witnesses of the wonderful event: one expecting her to be delivered of a giant; another of some enormous monster, and all were suspended in earnest expectation of somewhat grand and astonishing. When, after waiting with great impatience a considerable time, behold! out crept a mouse.

"Great cry and little wool," is the English proverb; the sense of which bears an exact proportion to this Fable. By which are exposed, all those who promise something exceedingly great, but come off with a production ridiculously little. Projectors of all kinds who endeavour by artificial rumours to raise the expectations of mankind, and then by their mean performances defeat and disappoint them, have, time out of mind, been lashed with the recital of this Fable. How agreeably surprising is it to see an unpromising favourite, whom the caprice of fortune has placed at the helm of state, serving the commonwealth with justice and integrity, instead of smothering and embezzling the public treasure to his own private and wicked ends! And on the contrary, how melancholy, how dreadful, or rather, how exasperating and provoking a sight is it, to behold one, whose constant declarations for liberty and the public good have raised people's expectation of him to the highest pitch, as soon as he is got into power, exerting his whole art and cunning to ruin and enslave his country! The sanguine hopes of all those that wished well to virtue, and flattered themselves with a reformation of everything that opposed the well-being of the community, vanish away in smoke, and are lost in a dark, gloomy, uncomfortable prospect.

THE MONKEYS AND THE BEARS.

A GREAT number of monkeys once lived in a country well stored with all manner of fruit. It happened one day a bear travelling that way by accident, and considering the beauty of the residence and the sweet lives the monkeys led, said to himself, "It is not just nor reasonable that these little animals should live so happy, while I am forced to run through forests and mountains in search of food." Full of indignation at this difference of fortune, he ran immediately among the apes, and killed some of them for very madness: but they all fell upon him; and being very numerous, they soon covered him with wounds, so that he had much ado to make his escape.

Thus punished for his rashness, he made what haste he could to escape; and at length gained a mountain within hearing of some of his comrades; and no sooner saw himself there, but he set up so loud a roaring, that a great number of bears immediately came about him, to whom he recounted what had befallen him. When they had heard his story out, instead of the emotions he expected to have found in them, they all laughed at him: "Thou art a most wretched coward," cried they, "to suffer thyself to be beaten by those little animals."—"This is true, indeed," replied a leading bear; "but still this affront is not to be endured; it must be revenged for the honour of our nation." On this they soon concerted proper measures to annoy the enemy; and towards the beginning of the night, all descended from the mountain, and fell pell-mell upon the monkeys, who were dreaming

of nothing less than of such an invasion; in short, they were all retired to their rest, when they were surrounded by the bears, who killed a great number, the rest escaping in disorder. After this exploit, the bears were so taken with this habitation, that they made choice of it for the place of their own settled abode. They set up for their king the bear that had been so ill handled by the monkeys; and after that fell to banquet upon the provisions which the latter had heaped together in their magazines.

The next morning, by break of day, the king of the monkeys, who knew nothing of this fatal calamity, for he had been hunting for two days together, met several monkeys maimed, who gave him an account of what had passed the day before. The king, when he heard this doleful news, immediately began to weep and lament the vast treasure he had lost, accusing Heaven of injustice, and Fortune of inconstancy. In the midst of all his indignation and sorrow, his subjects also pressed him to take his revenge; so that the poor king knew not which way to turn himself. Now among the monkeys that at that time attended on this monarch, there was one called Maimon, who was one of the most crafty and most learned in the court, and was the king's chief favourite. This poor creature, seeing his master sad, and his companions in consternation, stood up, and addressing himself to the king: "Persons of wit and discretion," said he, "never abandon themselves to despair, which is a tree that bears but very bad fruit; but patience, on the contrary, supplies us with a thousand inventions to rid ourselves out of the entanglements of trouble and adversity,"

The king, whom this discourse had rendered much more easy in his mind, turning to Maimon on this, said, "But how shall we do, vizier, to bring ourselves off with honour, from this ignominious misfortune?" Maimon besought his majesty on this, to allow him a private audience; and after he had obtained it, he spoke to this effect:

"Sir," said he, "I conjure you by the dear hopes of a great revenge to hear me out with patience. My heart is as much distracted, O my sacred master, for my private, if it be possible, as for the public misfortune: my wife and children have been massacred by these tyrants. Imagine then my grief, to see myself deprived for ever of those sweets which I enjoyed in the society of my family, and hear me with patience and full belief, when I assure you I am resolved to die, that I may put an end to my sorrows: but my death shall not be idle; no, I will find means to make it prove fatal to my royal master's enemies."—"O Maimon," said the king, "consider we never desire to be revenged of our enemies, but with intent to procure to ourselves repose or satisfaction of mind; but when you are dead, what signifies it to you whether the world be at war or in peace"—"Sir," replied Maimon, "in the condition I am, life being insupportable to me, I sacrifice it with delight to the happiness of my companions. All the favour I beg of your majesty is, to remember with gratitude and compassion my generosity, when you shall be re-established in your dominions. What I have further to ask of you is this, that you will immediately command my ears to be torn from my head, my teeth to be pulled out, and my feet to be cut off; and then let me be left for the night in a corner of the forest where we were lodged; then retire you, Sir, with the remainder, of your subjects, and remove two days' journey from hence, and on the

third you may return to your palace; for you shall hear no more of your enemies; and may you for ever reap the blessings my death intends you." The king, though with great grief, caused Maimon's desires to be executed, and left him in the wood, where all night he made the most doleful lamentations that ever misery uttered.

When day shone out, the king of the bears, who had all night long heard Maimon's outcries, advanced to see what miserable creature had made the noise; and beholding the poor monkey in that condition, he was moved with compassion, notwithstanding his merciless humour, and asked him who he was, and who had used him after that barbarous manner. Maimon, judging by all appearances that he was the king of the bears that spoke to him, after he had respectfully saluted him, expressed himself in the following words: "Sir," said he, "I am the king of the monkeys' chief minister; I went some days ago hunting with him, and at our return, understanding the ravages which your majesty's soldiers had committed in our houses, he took me aside, and asked me what was his best course to take at such a juncture. I answered him, without any hesitation, that we ought to put ourselves under your protection, that we might live at ease and unmolested. The king, my master, then talked many ridiculous things of your majesty, which was the reason that I took the boldness to tell him, that you were a most renowned prince, and beyond all comparison more potent than he; which audaciousness of mine incensed him to that degree, that immediately he commanded me to be thus mangled, as you see me."

Maimon had no sooner concluded his relation, than he let fall such a shower of tears, that the king of the bears was mollified also, and could not forbear weeping himself. When this was a little over, he asked Maimon where the monkeys were. "In a desert called Mardazmay," answered he, "where they are raising a prodigious army, the whole place, for a thousand leagues extent, being inhabited by no other creatures but monkeys; and there is no question to me but they will be with you in a very short time." The king of the bears, not a little terrified at this news, asked Maimon, whom he thought sufficiently exasperated against the monkey government to make him his assured friend, what course he should take to secure himself from the enterprises of the monkeys? "Face them boldly," replied Maimon: "your majesty need not fear them; were not my legs broken, I would undertake, with one single troop of your forces, to destroy forty thousand of them."—"You advise me well," said the king, "and with your help, I doubt not but I shall destroy them. There is no question but you know all the avenues to the camp. You will oblige us for ever would you but conduct us thither; and, be assured, we will revenge the barbarity committed upon your person."—"That, alas! is impossible," replied Maimon, "because I can neither go nor stand." "There is a remedy for everything," answered the king, "and I will find an invention to carry you;" and, at the same time, he gave orders to his army to be in readiness to march, and put themselves in a condition to fight. They all readily obeyed the orders, and tied Maimon, who was to be their guide, upon the head of one of the biggest bears.

Maimon now gloried in his mind that he had it in his power to revenge all that himself and his country had suffered; and, in order to it, conducted them into the

desert of Mardazmay, where there blew a poisonous wind, and where the heat was so vehement, that no creature could live an hour in it. Now when the bears were entered into the borders of this dangerous desert, Maimon, to engage them further into it; "Come," said he, "let us make haste and surprise these accursed wretches before day." With such exhortations he kept them on the march all night; but the next day they were astonished to find themselves in so dismal a place. They not only saw not so much as the likeness of a monkey, but they perceived that the sun had so heated the air, that the very birds that flew over the desert fell down, as it were, roasted to death; and the sand was so burning hot, that the bears' feet were all burned to the bones. The king, on this, cried out to Maimon, "Into what a desert hast thou brought us: and what fierce whirlwinds are these which I see coming towards us?" On this the monkey, finding they were all too far advanced for the least possibility of getting back, and therefore sure to perish, spoke boldly; and, in answer to the king of the bears, "Tyrant," said he, "know that we are in the desert of death; the whirlwind that approaches us is death itself, which comes in a moment to punish thee for all thy cruelties." And, while he was thus speaking, the fiery whirlwind came, and swept them all away.

Two days after this, the king of the monkeys returned to his palace, as Maimon foretold him; and, finding all his enemies gone, continued a long reign in peace over his subjects.

There is no trusting to the alluring words of an enemy: and he ought to perish who seeks the destruction of others.

THE SHEEP, THE BOAR AND THE CROW.

A greedy crow, with fierce attack,
Fix'd on a sheep's defenceless back.
There he enjoy'd luxurious plenty;
The wretched sheep was plump and dainty;
And pitiless, the crow for food
Devour'd her flesh, and drank her blood.
A mighty boar was passing near,
And cried, "Oho! what's doing here?
Malicious bird! what wrong has she,
Poor harmless creature, done to thee?
'Twas wise tho', when dispos'd to dine,
Rather to gnaw her back than mine:
For, by my life, I swear and vow—"
"My good Lord Hog," exclaim'd the crow,
"Trust me, I'm far too well aware
To be entrapp'd by such a snare.
For you, and all the bristly sect,
I feel the most profound respect:
And never an attack commence
But where I look for no defence."

THE ATHENIANS AND LACEDÆMONIANS.

It happened at Athens, during a public representation of some play exhibited in honour of the commonwealth, that an old gentleman came too late for a place suitable to his age and quality. Many of the young gentlemen who observed the difficulty and confusion he was in, made signs to him that they would accommodate him if he came where they sate; the good man bustled through the crowd accordingly; but when he came to the seats to which he was invited, the jest was to sit close and expose him, as he stood out of countenance, to the whole audience. The frolic went round all the Athenian benches. But on those occasions there were also particular places assigned for foreigners: when the good man skulked towards the boxes appointed for the Lacedæmonians, that honest people, more virtuous than polite, rose up all to a man, and with the greatest respect received him among them. The Athenians being suddenly touched with a sense of the Spartan virtue and their own degeneracy, gave a thunder of applause; and the old man cried out, "The Athenians understand what is good, but the Lacedæmonians practise it.

THE ANT AND THE FLEA.

Some persons have a way of claiming
All knowledge that is worth the naming,
Men who, whate'er they hear or see,
However new and rare it be,
Meet it with some contemptuous phrasing,
To spare themselves the pains of praising.
Now, by the soul of me, this class
Shall not my burning ordeal pass,
Without a fable with them taking,
Although it be a day in making.
An ant once shew'd a flea, her neighbour,
Th' effects of all her toil and labour;
The whole construction of her dwelling,
Explaining ev'ry part, and telling
The uses of each sep'rate story;
The granary—the dormitory—
Shew'd with what ease the grain they bear in,
The task amongst such numbers sharing,
And other things, which, feign'd or fabled,
Might seem, if we were not enabled
By study and experience due,
To know and hold them all as true.
The flea, to all this information,
Vouchsafed no other observation
Than sentences like these:—"Ha—so—
I understand—of course—I know—
I see—'tis clear—quite obvious that—

I don't see much to wonder at."
"Then," said the ant, "I wish you'd come
With me, my friend, and in our home,
For our advantage, let us see
A proof of your proficiency.
You speak in such a master-tone,
'Twill be no sooner said than done."
The flea with impudence unshamed,
Cut a light caper and exclaim'd,
"Surely you do not mean to doubt
My skill to work such trifles out;
'Tis but t' apply one's-self—but stay—
I am busy now—another day."

THE TWO ADVENTURERS.

The path of pleasure never leads to glory! The prodigious achievements of Hercules were the result of high adventure, and though there is little, either in fable or history, to shew that he had any rivals, still it is recorded that a knight-errant, in company with a fellow adventurer, sought his fortune in a romantic country. He had not travelled far when his companion observed a post, on which was written the following inscription: "Brave adventurer, if you have a desire to discover that which has never been seen by any knight-errant, you have only to pass this torrent, and then taking in your arms an elephant of stone, carry it in one breath to the summit of this mountain, whose noble head seems blended with the sky."—"But," said the companion of the knight," the water may be deep, as well as rapid, and though notwithstanding, we should pass it, why should we be encumbered with the elephant? What a ridiculous undertaking!" and philosophically and with nice calculation, he observed that it might be carried four steps; but for conveying it to the top of the mountain in one breath, that was not in the power of mortal; unless it should be the dwarf figure of an elephant, fit only to be placed on the top of a stick; and then what honour would there be in such an adventure? "There is," said he, "some deception in this writing. It is an enigma only fit to amuse a child. I shall therefore leave you and your elephant." The reasoner then departed; but the adventurous man rushed with his eyes closed across the water; neither depth nor violence prevented him, and according to the inscription he saw the elephant lying on the opposite bank. He took it and carried it to the top of the hill, where he saw a town. A shriek from the elephant alarmed the people of the city, who rose in arms; but the adventurer, nothing daunted, was determined to die a hero. The people were however awed by his presence, and he was astonished to hear them proclaim him successor to their king, who had recently died.

Great enterprises are only acheived by adventurous spirits. They who calculate with too great nicety every difficulty and obstacle which is likely to lie in their way, lose that time in hesitation, which the more daring seize and render available to the loftiest purposes.

THE HEIFER SACRIFICED.

An heifer, doom'd to pay with blood
The debt of human gratitude,
In gorgeous pomp by priests was led
Where Jove's high altar rear'd its head.
Her temples wore a flowery wreath;
Sad ornament!—presage of death.
In truth, the King of Gods was wise,
To shut his book from human eyes;
For stale and weary life would grow,
Were men their future doom to know.
Our heifer, with exulting pride,
Beheld the crowds, on either side,
Who throng'd with smiling flowers to spread
The avenue to death that led.
Two bulls, whose neck a yoke oppress'd,
She pass'd; and fortune inly bless'd
For fixing her exalted place
Above a destiny so base.
How little did the heifer know
The real state of things below!
How ignorant is simple youth!
How ready to misjudge the truth!

Thus seeks the nymph whose royal hand
Has been betroth'd, a foreign land;
There to embrace the nuptial vow:
Crowds, as she goes, adoring bow;
And she, poor maid, with pitying mind,
Regards the homely village hind—
The village hind, more happy far
Than she in her triumphal car.
At length, with splendid celebration,
Arrives the day of immolation,
And robs the heifer of her life;
Of liberty the royal wife.

We oft remark that, by the fate
Assign'd to this imperfect state,
If one a step of honour gains,
Less private happiness remains.
And this exchange appears to rest
In what for general good is best.

On chosen men, when nations shower,
As proofs of favour, rank or power,
The partial measure justice blames,
And deems unfair to other claims,

Unless they duly pay the price,
By some heroic sacrifice.
'This maxim let us then approve—
A maxim generous bosoms love;
May we the humble happy see,
The exalted still the victim be!

THE RAVENOUS CAT.

A CERTAIN person bred up a cat very frugally in his own house. He gave her enough to suffice nature, though nothing superfluous: and she might, if she pleased, have lived very happily with him; but she was very ravenous, and, not content with her ordinary food, hunted about in every corner for more. One day, passing by a dove-house she saw some young pigeons that were hardly fledged; and presently her teeth watered for a taste of those delicate viands. With this resolution, she boldly mounted into the dove-house, never minding whether the master were there or not, and was presently, with great joy, preparing to satisfy her gluttonous desires. But the master of the place no sooner saw the epicure of a cat enter, than he shut the doors, and stopped up all the holes at which it was possible for her to get out again, and so bestirred himself, that he caught the felonious baggage, and hung her up at the corner of the pigeon-house. Soon after this, the owner of the cat passing that way, and seeing his cat hanging, "Unfortunate beast," said he, "hadst thou been contented with thy meaner food, thou hadst not been now in this condition! Thus," continued he, moralizing on the spectacle, "insatiable gluttons are the procurers of their own untimely ends."

THE SOW AND THE WOLF.

A sow had just farrowed, and lay in the sty with her whole litter of pigs about her. A wolf, who longed for one of them, but knew not how to come at it, endeavoured to insinuate himself into the sow's good opinion: and accordingly coming up to her, "How does the good woman in the straw do?" said he; "can I be of any service to you, Mrs. Sow, in relation to your little family here? if you have a mind to go abroad, and air yourself a little, you may depend upon it I will take as much care of your pigs as you could do yourself."—"Your humble servant," said the sow; "I thoroughly understand your meaning; and to let you know I do, I must be so free as to tell you, I had rather have your room than your company; and therefore, if you would act like a wolf of honour, and oblige me, I beg I may never see your face again."

The being officiously good-natured and civil, is something so uncommon in the world, that one cannot hear a man make profession of it without being surprised, or at least suspecting the disinterestedness of his intentions: especially when one who is a stranger to us, or though known, is ill-esteemed by us, will be making offers of services, we have great reason to look to ourselves, and exert a shyness and coldness towards them.



THE OLD MAN AND HIS ASS.

THE OLD MAN AND HIS ASS.

An ancient codger, mounted on an ass,
Thump'd his tough hide along a smooth highway;
They reached a place where sprang abundant grass:
Upon this fair, luxuriant mead
He turned his donkey loose to feed—
Who, at the rare occasion blithe and gay,
Kick'd up his heels, and rolling, braying, brousing,
Was glad at heart to enjoy such fine carousing.

The trumpet's blast announc'd th' approaching foe:
"Jack!" said the man, "for flight we must prepare."
"Why so?" replied the donkey, "fain I'd know,
If I be taken whilst I tarry,
Shall I a double burthen carry,
Or on my back two pair of panniers bear?"
"No," quoth the man:—"I'll stay then—what care I?
Whoe'er is master is our enemy."

THE CARP AND HER LITTLE ONES.

"Take care, my children," said a carp to her little ones, "don't go so close to the shore, keep in the midst of the stream; beware of the murderous line, or of the still more dangerous fish-hawk." It was in the month of April: the snow and ice, melted by the approach of spring, rushed in torrents from the mountains, making the waters of the Seine rise to so considerable a height, that all the neighbouring country was flooded. "Ah! ah!" cried the little carp, "what are you talking about old lady? don't be afraid of us. Behold! we are citizens of the stormy ocean: there is naught in sight but sea and sky; the trees are hidden beneath the wave, and we are masters of the world. The deluge has come again."—"You are wrong, my children," said the old mother; "the waters may retire in an instant; therefore don't go away for fear of accident, but follow the course of the river."—"Bah!" said the fish, "you are always telling us the same thing. Good-bye, we are going to survey our new domain." Thus saying, our young blockheads left the bed of the Seine, and swam about in the waters which covered the country. What was the consequence? The flood suddenly retired, and our little carp were grounded; they were soon after taken and fried.

THE PARTRIDGE AND THE FALCON.

A partridge was promenading at the foot of a hill, and tuning her throat, in her coarse style, so delightfully, that a falcon flying that way, and hearing her voice, came towards her, and very civilly was going to ask her acquaintance. "Nobody,"

said he to himself, "can live without a friend; and it is the saying of the wise, that they who want friends labour under perpetual sickness." With these thoughts, he would fain have accosted the partridge; but she, perceiving him, escaped into a hole, trembling with fear. The falcon followed her, and presenting himself at the mouth of the hole, "My dear partridge," said he, "I own that I never had hitherto any great kindness for you, because I did not know your merit; but since my good fortune now has made me acquainted with your merry note, be pleased to give me leave to speak with you, that I may offer you my friendship, and that I may beg of you to grant me yours."—"Tyrant," answered the partridge, "let me alone, and labour not in vain to reconcile fire and water."—"Most amiable partridge," replied the falcon, "banish these idle fears, and be convinced that I love you and desire that we may enter into a familiarity together; had I any other design, I would not trouble myself to court you with such soft language out of your hole. Believe me, I have such good pounces, that I would have seized a dozen other partridges in the time that I have been courting your affection. I am sure you will have reason enough to be glad of my friendship; because no other falcon shall do you any harm while you are under my protection; and being in my nest, you will be honoured by the world."—"It is impossible for me to think that you can have so much kindness for me," replied the partridge: "but indeed should this be true, I ought not to accept your proposal; for you being the prince of birds, and of the greatest strength, and I a poor weak partridge, whenever I shall do anything that displeases you, you will not fail to tear me to pieces."—"No, no," said the falcon, "set your heart at rest for that; the faults that friends commit are easily pardoned." Much other discourse of this kind passed between them, and many doubts were started and answered satisfactorily, so that at length the falcon testified such an extraordinary friendship for the partridge, that she could no longer refuse to come out of her hole. And no sooner was she come forth, than the falcon tenderly embraced her, and carried her to his nest, where, for two or three days, he made it his whole business to divert her. The partridge, overjoyed to see herself so caressed, gave her tongue more liberty than she had done before, and talked much of the cruelty and savage temper of the birds of prey. This began to offend the falcon; though for the present he dissembled it. One day, however, he unfortunately fell ill, which hindered him from going abroad in search of prey, so that he grew hungry, and, wanting victuals, he soon became melancholy, morose and churlish. His being out of humour quickly alarmed the partridge, who kept herself, very prudently, close in a corner, with a very modest countenance. But the falcon, soon after, no longer able to endure the importunities of his stomach, resolved to pick a quarrel with the poor partridge. "It is not proper," said he, "that you should lie lurking there in the shade, while all the world is exposed to the heat of the sun." The partridge, trembling in every joint, replied, "King of birds, it is now night, and all the world is in the shade as well as I, nor do I know what sun you mean." —"Insolent baggage," replied the falcon, "then you will make me either a liar or mad:" and so saying, he fell upon her, and tore her to pieces.

THE YOUNG DOG.

A PLAYFUL dog, of generous sort,
But giddy, wild, and full of sport,
Like other youth, tho' youth is still
The dearest age, say what we will,
Once, in the forest, met a creature,
His like in habit, shape and feature.
The dog, all heart, was frank and free,
No caution—no distrust had he—
Distrust, a guard th' ingenuous needs,
'Tis malice or experience breeds.
Our dog had neither—but, at sight,
A friendship forms, with keen delight.
Thus oft do young adventurers haste,
The charms of some unknown to taste;
'Though rarely does the lover gain,
From such an error, aught but pain.
Our luckless whelp not better far'd:
His friend, with him so nicely pair'd,
In figure, manners, gait and feature;
Was a perfidious perverse creature—
He was—the truth at once to say,
A young wolf-cub, a beast of prey:
And, like a fool, the worried dog
For dinner serv'd the treacherous rogue.
'Tis fit we know before we love,
And favourites by acquaintance prove.
This is the counsel wisdom gives,
Which from the Fable force derives.
But ardent youth and cool reflection,
Like opposites, resist connection.
We feel, in that delightful age,
Our hearts with other hearts engage;
And friend or lover then commence,
Far less from choice, than fever'd sense:
Our hearts with fond desires are swell'd,
And by delicious warmth impell'd,
To interchange the tender vow,
We know not, care not, why or how.
Thrice happy he, who, at the age
When love's bewitching arts engage.
By cool instinctive prudence watch'd
Is unseduc'd, and yet attach'd;
And antedates the age of thought,
When, by repentance, men are taught.

THE TWO PIGEONS.

THERE were two pigeons very fond of each other; but one of them, being tired of home, was desirous of undertaking a voyage to remote countries. The other, however, said to him: "Where would you go? Would you forsake your brother? Wandering is often attended with great disasters." At this moment a raven appeared. His companion drew his attention to the ominous bird; and made use of the circumstance as an argument of dissuasion. "Nonsense," replied the other, "it is only nets and falcons that augur evil to us pigeons."—"Nevertheless," said the first, "you should reflect, my dear brother, on what you are about. The raven seldom ventures into new haunts without being pretty certain of obtaining what he seeks, and I make a point of avoiding him. You are now in the quiet enjoyment of good board and lodging, and ought to be happy in your station." But so strong was the other's desire for travelling, that no argument could dissuade him from going. He replied, however, to his dejected friend: "Do not weep; three days, at the most, will render me quite satisfied; when I shall return to relate the whole of my adventures to my brother; which will be sure to entertain him. The description of my voyage will afford you extreme pleasure. The picture I shall give of the various places I see, will be so lively, that you will imagine you were there yourself." After these remarks, they affectionately embraced and bade each other adieu. The lonely traveller had not proceeded far, when a storm obliged him to seek refuge in a tree; but heavy rain beat through the foliage, and drenched his plumage. After the shower, he dried himself as well as he could, and resumed his journey. On his way he saw a pigeon in a cornfield. Filled with envy at his apparently pleasant situation, he flew to the spot and was caught in a net. But with the strength of his feet and beak he partly broke through. At this moment, a vulture pounced upon him; but while endeavouring to remove the remaining portions of the net-work that bound his prey, an eagle, with expanded wings appeared. A conflict ensued between the two marauders of the sky; during which their victim escaped, and flying for refuge to the ruins of a house, he fancied his misfortunes were now at an end. He had, however, to encounter other perils. An owl saw and endeavoured to capture him; but by a singular piece of good fortune he again contrived to escape: after which he hastened to return home.

True enjoyment is rarely found beyond the bosom of our own family. Those who are actuated by the capricious influence of a volatile disposition, often forsake, like our restless pigeon, the substantial pleasures of home, to reap in their wanderings, disappointment and sorrow.

THE YOUNG LINNET.

A YOUNG linnet, placed in a warm nest, poured forth its notes when the snow of winter enlivened the ground. In May it sung the notes of spring; but, taking a great fancy to the company of sparrows and swallows, it soon lost its own fine warbling, and, at the end of the summer, could only imitate the simple chirrupping of its companions.

THE LEOPARD AND THE LION.

In the neighbourhood of Bassora, there was a very lovely island, in which grew a most delightful wood, where pleasing breezes whispered their love stories to the rustling leaves; this enchanting forest was watered by several fountains, whence a number of recreating streams ran gently winding to every part of it: in this enchanting place there lodged a leopard so furious, that even the most daring lions durst not approach within a league of his habitation. For several years, his renowned and unequalled courage kept him in peace within this island, with a little leopard that was his favourite and heir. "Son," said he to him one day, "as soon as thou shalt be strong enough to oppose my enemies, I will resign to thee the care of governing this island, and retire into one corner of it, where I shall spend the remainder of my days, without trouble or molestation." But death crossed the old leopard's design: he died when he least dreamt of it, and the young one, before he expected it, succeeded him. The ancient enemies of the old leopard no sooner heard of his death, and the weakness of his successor, but they entered into a league, and together invaded the island; and the young leopard, finding himself unable to withstand such a number of enemies, made his escape into the deserts, and there secured himself. In the mean time his enemies having made themselves masters of the island, every one claimed an equal right to the sovereignty, and each would command in chief. Thus they fell out, and the business came to the decision of a battle, wherein the lion being victor, drove all the rest of his competitors out of his territories, and became the sole and peaceable master of the island.

Some years after, the leopard having devoted his life to travel, in one of his journeys, meeting an assembled body of lions in a remote part of the forest, recounted to them his misfortunes, and besought them to assist him in the recovery of his just inheritance. But the lions, who knew full well the strength of the usurper, refused their assistance to the leopard, and replied: "Poor silly creature, dost thou not understand that thy island is now under the power of a lion so redoubted, that the very birds are afraid to fly over his head? We advise thee rather," added they, "to go and wait upon him, submissively offer thy services to him, and take some lucky opportunity privately to revenge the injuries he has done thee." The leopard followed this counsel, went to the lion's court, and there intruding himself into the acquaintance of one of the most favourite domestics, by a thousand caresses, engaged him to give him an opportunity of discoursing with his master. When he had obtained permission, he played his part so well, that the lion found him to be a creature of so much merit, that he conferred a very noble employment upon him in his court, and in a very little time the leopard so insinuated himself into the lion's favour, that the first grandees of the court began to grow jealous of him. But their jealousies were all in vain, the lion found him more valuable than them all, and in spite of their idle malice, treated him accordingly. It happened some time after this, that some extraordinary exigence of state called away the lion to a place far distant from the island; but the monarch, being now grow lazy, had no mind to stir out of his delightful abode at a time that the heat was so excessive: this the leopard perceiving, offered to undertake the voyage himself, and after he had obtained leave, departed, arrived

at the place, despatched his business, and returned back to court with such unexpected speed, that the king, admiring his diligence, said to those about him, "This leopard is one whom it is impossible for me sufficiently to reward; he contemns labour, and despises hardship, so it be to procure the welfare and peace of my dominions." Having said this, he sent for the leopard, highly applauded his zeal, and, in reward of his services, gave him the government of all his forests, and made him his heir.

THE DOG UNFORTUNATELY ASSISTED.

Dark was the night, when, thro' a wood,
A traveller his way pursued:
So deep the gloom, so close the trees,
His lifted hand he scarcely sees;
But, hastening to a neighbouring fair,
He must, by peep of dawn, be there.
A knotty club his steps defends;
A dog, for page, his side attends;
And, thus escorted, he proceeds,
Nor thinks of harm, nor danger dreads,
When, for the curse of luckless Tray,
They find a wolf beset their way.
A fight ensues. The dog was strong;
The wolf in carnage practis'd long:
The traveller too, his aid to lend,
And shield from wrong an injur'd friend,
Lays on his bludgeon all around,
But only strikes the harmless ground.
The midnight gloom his labour mocks,
And idly fall his furious strokes.
At length he hits—and cleaves a head;
But not the wolf's—O piteous deed!
His faithful dog was in the way;
And now all's over with poor Tray.
You sons of physic, here I call:
Mishaps like this your heart befall.
Disease and Nature are the foes;
And while they mix their mutual blows,
You come with clubs to end the fight:
But oh, how very dark the night!

THE KITE AND THE STORK.

A kite pounced upon a lark, stripped off its feathers, and devoured it. "Alas!" said a stork, "but a moment ago how enchantingly that little bird sang!" "Stork," said the kite, "pray restrain your sighs. You just now destroyed two frogs, whose croak to me was most delightful."

THE KING AND HIS TWO SONS.

In the country of Ardos, there lived an ancient king, who had two sons, both covetous, yet given to debauchery. This monarch, finding the infirmities of age increase upon him, and that he was hastening to the other world, and considering the humour of his two sons, was much afraid that after his death they would dissipate in idle expences the vast treasure which he had heaped together; therefore he resolved to hide it. With this design he went to a religious hermit who had retired from the world, and in whom he had very great confidence. By the counsel of this latter, the treasure was buried in the earth, near where the hermit dwelt, so privately, that nobody knew anything of it. This done, the king made his will, which he put into the hermit's hands, with these further orders. "I charge you," said he, "to reveal this treasure to my children, when after my death you see them in the distresses of poverty. It may be," added the king, "that when they have suffered a little hardship, they will become more prudent in their conduct."

The hermit having promised all fidelity in the observance of the king's commands, the monarch returned to his palace, and in a short time after died; nor did the hermit long survive him; the treasure therefore lay concealed, probably for ever to continue so, in the hermitage. The king being now dead, the sons could not agree about the succession. This occasioned a bloody war between them; and the eldest, who was the more powerful, utterly despoiled his younger brother of all that he had. This young prince, thus deprived of his inheritance, fell into a deep melancholy, and resolved to quit the world. To that purpose he left the city, and calling to mind the kindness between his father and the hermit, "There is no other way for me," said he to himself, "but to find out this honest man, that I may learn of him to live as he does, and end my life in peace and contentedness in his company." With this resolution he left the city, but coming to the hermitage, found that the hermit was dead. He was greatly afflicted and disappointed at this unexpected chance, but at length came to a resolution to live as he had done, and accordingly made choice of his retirement for his habitation.

There was in this hermitage a well, which had been used to supply the place with water, but it was now dry; to enquire into the cause of this, the unhappy prince ventured to let himself down to the bottom: but how great was his astonishment, when he saw the lower part of it for a great depth filled with his father's treasures. On finding this, he was thankful to Heaven, and wisely took up a resolution to lay out his money with more moderation than he had done before.

On the other hand, his brother, who sat securely revelling upon his throne, without any care of his people or his army, imagining that his father's treasure was hid in the palace, as he had told him upon his death-bed, one day, being at war with a neighbouring prince, was obliged to have recourse to his expected treasure. But how was he amazed, after he had sought a long time and found nothing; this quite disabled him from raising a powerful army, and threw him into a fit of melancholy. However, making a virtue of necessity, he raised what force he could, and marched out of the city to meet and encounter his enemy. The battle was obstinate, and this king and his enemy were both slain; so that

the two armies, enraged at the loss of their leaders, fell to butchering each other with equal fury, till at length the generals having agreed together, that it would be their better way to choose a mild and gentle king for the government of the state, went and found out the young prince, who was retired to the hermitage, conducted him in great pomp to the royal palace, and seated him upon the throne.

It is better for men to rely upon Providence, than to torment themselves about the acquisition of a thing that was never ordained them.

THE VIPER AND THE LEECH.

"Although we both inflict a wound,
A diff'rence in our powers is found,"
Said, in the eloquence of speech,
The viper to the harmless leech;
"Thy lips a balsam can impart
To sooth of agony the smart;
While men, if I appear in sight,
Hurry away in wild affright,
Amaz'd, that from so small a thing,
Such fatal maladies should spring."—
"The cause I will explain, my friend"
Return'd the leech, "if you'll attend:
We bite alike, I will confess,
Yet diff'rent properties possess;
To me kind Nature has bestow'd
The will and power of doing good
I, when malignant fevers reign,
Or wounds severe occasion pain,
Allay the direful throb, and save
Frail mortals from an early grave;
But if you bite, a deadly flame,
Pervades, alas! man's hapless frame,
Unstrings his nerves, pollutes his breath,
And gives him to the jaws of death."

THE VIOLETS.

A border of small, sweet-scented violets environed a bed of tall tulips. Though these little violets did not attract the eye in the day, yet the nightingale at evening would often pay them a visit, for the sake of enjoying their sweet perfume. At length the scythe came, and levelled these mellifluous flowers as ill weeds, while the gaudy and scentless tulips were left standing.

"Thus it is with man!" exclaimed the nightingale, on his re-visiting the garden and not finding the violets; "they often value outward show, more than inward worth!"



THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

Fair Nature's smiles revive in jocund spring,
The fields their brightest, softest livery wear;
The feather'd choir in tuneful concert sing,
To hail the sweetest season of the year.
Love seems to animate each earthly thing:
To feel the glow all nature's tribes appear,
The monsters of the deep, fierce beasts of prey,
Not less than birds upon the blossom'd spray.

A prudish lark for once had miss'd a mate,
Nor of the other larks pursued the plan,
Who in green wheat essay the nuptial state.
When summer came, she yielded;—then began
To form her procreant nest, tho' rather late:
Scarce fledg'd her young, when now the husbandman
View'd his tall corn assume a tint of brown,
And thought 'twas almost time to cut it down.

The anxious mother, ere she left her brood,
(For distant was her flight each dewy morn,
To gather for her tender nurslings food,
Who lay concealed among the ripening corn,)
Trembling at thoughts of reapers' footsteps rude,
Thus her half callow birds began to warn:
"Yon farmer, with his son, comes here each day;
If I am absent mark well what they say:

"At my return report each single word,
On what you hear our movements must depend."
She fled:—the rustics came, as spoke the bird—
"Go," said the father, "summon ev'ry friend;
The wheat is ripe, and must not be deferr'd,
Let the whole troop at break of day attend.
The joyous task with glee we will begin,
And numerous hands shall get the harvest in."

The little larks heard this with throbbing heart;
"Mother," said they, "to-day the farmer calls
His friends to work, and each will take a part;
What fate to-morrow, our poor nest befalls!"
"If that's the worst," said she, "we need not start:
This news with no alarm my mind appals.
Sleep sound to-night, my children, free from sorrow,
But listen with increasing care to-morrow."

Bright dawn'd the day, and glorious rose the sun,
Off flew the lark:—the farmer takes his round,
As usual,—but of friends appear'd not one!
"Poor help," the good-man cries, "in friends is found.
Haste thee, my boy, to all our kindred run,
In relatives, thank Fortune, we abound—
No more we'll trust, my son, in friendship fickle,
But ask our cousins each to bring his sickle."

At sounds like these more terror seized the nest;—
"Mother," they cry, "he sends for all his kin,
Who will at once comply with his request:
To-morrow's dawn will see the work begin!"
"Let not this threat, my dears, disturb your rest;
Nor yet the foe will this asylum win.
Here sleep in peace, nor yield to groundless fear,
But lend to all that's said attentive ear."

The morning broke, but not a cousin came!
The farmer, mindful of his rural pelf,
Said, "Twice, my son, have I been much to blame;
Who trusts in friends is but a foolish elf;
He who confides in kindred is the same:
A wise man still depends upon himself.
To-morrow you and I our hooks will wield;

Slow perseverance well shall rid the field."
When this the lark was told, "My children, now,
Here to remain no longer must we dare;
No longer stay the Destinies allow;
To spoil our nest in earnest they prepare.
Before the sun ascends yon mountain's brow,
Weak tho' your pinions, you must tempt the air."
At dawn of day the active rustics come,
And the young Larks decamp *sans* beat of drum.

THE MOUSE AND THE SNAIL.

I WOULD rather decline the honour of dragging my house always about, and of being forced from the weight of it, to trail along as you do," said a mouse to a snail "See how easily I can in a moment go to a distance which it would take you a whole day to drag over."

"It is true, my dear mouse," answered the other, "that you are fleet; it is only a pity that Nature did not give this advantage to you exclusively, but conferred it also on your mortal enemy, the cat. When you often fly, tremblingly, before her, from corner to corner, and look about everywhere for a hole to hide yourself; do you not then wish for a house of your own? and would you not then, for the sake of the greater advantage, be well content to bear a trifling inconvenience?"

JOVE'S PETITIONERS.

MENIPPUS, the philosopher, was a second time taken up into Heaven by Jupiter, when for his entertainment he lifted up a trap-door that was placed by his footstool. At its rising, there issued through it such a din of cries as astonished the philosopher. Upon his asking what they meant, Jupiter told him they were the prayers that were sent up to him from the earth. Menippus, amidst the confusion of voices, which was so great, that nothing less than the ear of Jove could distinguish them, heard the words "Riches, honour, and long life," repeated to several different tones and languages. When the first hubbub of sounds was over, the trap-door being left open, the voices came up more separate and distinct. The first prayer was a very odd one; it came from Athens, and desired Jupiter to increase the wisdom and the beard of his humble supplicant. Menippus knew it by the voice, to be the prayer of his friend Licander the philosopher. This was succeeded by the petition of one who had just laden a ship, and promised Jupiter, if he took care of it, and returned it home again full of riches, he would make him an offering of a silver cup. Jupiter thanked him for nothing; and bending down his ear more attentively than ordinary, heard a voice complaining to him of the cruelty of an Ephesian widow, and begging him to breed compassion in her heart. "This" said Jupiter, "is a very honest fellow: I have received a great deal of incense from him; I will not be so cruel to him as not to hear his prayers. He was then interrupted with a whole volley of vows, which were made for the health of a tyrannical prince by his subjects, who prayed for him in his presence. Menippus was surprised, after having listened to prayers offered up with so much ardour and devotion, to hear low whispers from the same assembly, expostulating with Jove for suffering such a tyrant to live, and asking him how his thunder could lie idle. Jupiter was so offended at these prevaricating rascals, that he took down the first vows, and puffed away the last. The philosopher seeing a great cloud mounting upwards, and making its way directly to the trap-door, enquired of Jupiter what it meant. "This," said Jupiter, "is the smoke of a whole hecatomb that is offered me by the general of an army, who is very importunate with me to let him cut off a hundred thousand men, that are drawn up in array against him: what does the impudent wretch think I see in him, to believe that I will make a sacrifice of so many mortals as good as himself, and all this to his glory, forsooth? But hark," said Jupiter, "there is a voice I never heard but in time of danger; it is a rogue that is shipwrecked in the Ionian sea. I saved him on a plank but three days ago, upon his promise to mend his manners; the scoundrel is not worth a groat, and yet has the impudence, to offer me a temple, if I will keep him from sinking. But yonder," said he, "is a special youth for you, he desires me to take his father, who keeps a great estate from him, out of the miseries of human life. The old fellow shall live till he makes his heart ache, I can tell him that for his pains." This was followed by the soft voice of a pious lady, desiring Jupiter that she might appear amiable and charming in the sight of her emperor. As the philosopher was reflecting on this extraordinary petition, there blew a gentle wind through the trap-door, which he at first mistook for a gale of zephyrs, but afterwards found it to be a breeze of sighs; they smelt strongly of flowers and incense,

and were succeeded by most passionate complaints of wounds and torments, fires and arrows, cruelty, despair and death. Menippus fancied that such lamentable cries arose from some general execution, or from wretches lying under the torture; but Jupiter told him that they came up to him from the Isle of Paphos, and that he every day received complaints of the same nature from that whimsical tribe of mortals who are called lovers. "I am so trifled with," said he, "by this generation of both sexes, and find it so impossible to please them, whether I grant or refuse their petitions, that I shall order a westerly wind for the future to intercept them in their passage, and blow them at random upon the earth. The last petition he heard, was from a very aged man of near an hundred years old, begging but for one year more of life, and then promising to die contented. "This is the rarest old fellow," said Jupiter, "he has made this prayer to me for above twenty years together. When he was but fifty years old, he desired only that he might live to see his son settled in the world; I granted it. He then begged the same favour for his daughter, and afterwards, that he might see the education of a grandson: when all this was brought about, he puts up a petition, that he might live to finish a house he was building. In short, he is an unreasonable old cur, and never wants an excuse; I will hear no more of him." Upon which he flung down the trap-door in a passion, and was resolved to give no more audience that day.

Notwithstanding the levity of this Fable, the moral of it very well deserves our attention, and is the same with that which has been inculcated by Socrates and Plato, not to mention Juvenal and Persius, who have each of them made the finest satire in their whole works upon this subject. The vanity of men's wishes, which are the natural prayers of the mind, as well as many of those secret devotions which they offer to the Supreme Being, are sufficiently exposed by it.

THE STAGS.

A STAG, with his whole family, quitted his abode in the forest, to reside in a certain park. Before, however, they could enter it, they had a deep morass to pass. "Children," said the parent stag, "follow me carefully, otherwise you will daub yourselves." They attended to his counsel, and fortunately got through the mire; but not without getting somewhat soiled. A young one, who had remained behind, scoffingly said to the rest: "By going through in that manner, you are all as dirty as pigs; look at me, and I will shew how you should have shunned this quagmire." He then took a leap, and, not being able to reach the other side, sunk up to his ears in mud.

THE YOUTH AND THE OLD MAN.

"MY dear father," said an ambitious youth, "have the goodness to tell me how to make a fortune."—"It is," said the old man, "a glorious pursuit; in order to acquire a fortune, one must labour in the common cause, devote his days, his nights, his talents to the service of his country."—"Ah! that would be too wearisome a life; I wish for some less brilliant means."—"There is a more certain method, intrigue."—"That were disgraceful; I would enrich myself without vice and without labour."—"Well then, be a fool, I have known many a one succeed."

THE DERVISE AND THE FOUR ROBBERS.

A DERVISE had made a purchase of a fine, fat sheep, with intent to offer it up in sacrifice; and having tied a cord about its neck, was leading it to his habitation: but on the way four thieves perceived him, and had a great mind to steal his holy sacrifice for less holy uses. They dared not, however, take it away from the dervise by force, because they were too near the city; therefore they made use of this stratagem: they first parted company and then accosted the dervise, whom they knew to be an honest and inoffensive man, and one who thought of no more harm in others than he had in himself, as if they had come from several distinct parts. The first of them, who had contrived to meet him, said, "Father, whither are you leading this dog?" At this instant the second coming from another quarter, cried to him, "Venerable old gentleman, I hope you have not so far forgotten yourself as to have stolen this dog;" and immediately after him, the third coming up, and asking him, Whither he would go coursing with that handsome greyhound; the poor dervise began to doubt whether the sheep which he had was a sheep or not. But the fourth robber put him quite beside himself, coming up at that instant, and saying to him, "Pray, reverend father, what did this dog cost you?" The dervise, on this, absolutely persuaded that four men, coming from four several places, could not all be deceived, verily believed that the grazier who had sold him the sheep was a conjuror, and had bewitched his sight; insomuch that no longer giving credit to his own eyes, he began to be firmly convinced that the sheep he was leading was a dog; and immediately, in full persuasion of it, went back to market to demand his money of the grazier, leaving the wether with the felons, who carried it away.

THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN.

WHY are those tears? why droops your head?
Is then your other husband dead?
Or does a worse disgrace betide;
Hath no one since his death applied?
  Alas! you know the cause too well:
The salt is spilt, to me it fell.
Then, to contribute to my loss,
My knife and fork were laid across;
On Friday too! the day I dread!
Would I were safe at home in bed!
Last night, I vow to Heaven 'tis true,
Bounce from the fire a coffin flew.
Next post some fatal news shall tell.
God send my Cornish friends be well!
  Unhappy widow, cease thy tears,
Nor feel affliction in thy fears:
Let not thy stomach be suspended;
Eat now, and weep when dinner's ended;
And when the butler clears the table,
For thy dessert I'll read my Fable.

Betwixt her swagging panniers' load
A farmer's wife to market rode,
And jogging on, with thoughtful care,
Summ'd up the profits of her ware;
When starting from her silver dream,
Thus far and wide was heard her scream.
"That raven on yon left-hand oak,
Curse on his ill-betiding croak,
Bodes me no good." No more she said,
When poor blind Ball, with stumbling tread,
Fell prone; o'erturn'd the panniers lay,
And her mash'd eggs bestrew'd the way.
She, sprawling in the yellow road,
Rail'd, swore, and curs'd: "Thou croaking toad,
A murrain take thy rascal throat;
I knew misfortune in the note."
"Dame," quoth the raven, "spare your oaths,
Unclench your fist, and wipe your clothes.
But why on me those curses thrown?
Goody, the fault was all your own;
For had you laid this brittle ware
On Dun, the old sure-footed mare,
Though all the ravens of the hundred
With croaking had your tongue out-thunder'd,
Sure-footed Dun had kept his legs,
And you, good woman, sav'd your eggs."

THE MERCHANT, HIS WIFE, AND THE ROBBER.

A MERCHANT, very rich, but homely, and very deformed in his person, had married a very fair and virtuous wife. He loved her passionately; but, on the other hand, she hated him, insomuch that, not being able to endure him, she lay by herself in a separate bed in the same chamber.

It happened, soon after they married, that a thief one night broke into the house, and came into the chamber. The husband was at this time asleep; but the wife being awake, and perceiving the thief, was in such a terrible fright, that she ran to her husband, and caught him fast in her arms. The husband, waking, was transported with joy to see the delight of his life clasping him in her embraces. "Bless me!" cried he, "to what am I obliged for this extraordinary happiness? I wish I knew the person to whom I owe it, that I might return him thanks." Hardly had he uttered the words when the thief appeared, and he soon guessed the whole occasion. "Oh!" cried the merchant, "the most welcome person in the world; take whatever thou thinkest fitting; I cannot reward thee sufficiently for the good service thou hast done me."

THE MAN AND HIS TWO WIVES.

A MAN had two wives, one of whom, like himself, had seen her best days, and was just, as it were, entering upon the declivity of life; but this, being an artful woman, she entirely concealed by her dress; by which, and some other elegant qualities, she made a shift sometimes to engage her husband's heart. The other was a beautiful young creature of seventeen, who as yet in the height of her charms, and secure of her own power, had no occasion to call in any artifice to her assistance. She made the good man as happy as he was capable of being, but was not, it seems, completely so herself. The grey hairs, mixed with the black upon her husband's head, gave her some uneasiness, by proclaiming the great disparity of their years; wherefore, under colour of adjusting and combing his head, she would every now and then be twitching the silver hairs with her nippers, that however matters were, he might still have as few visible signs of an advanced age as possible. The dame, whose years were nearer to an equality with his own, esteemed those grey locks as the honours of his head, and could have wished they had all been such: she thought it gave him a venerable look, at least, that it made her appear something younger than him; so that every time the honest man's head fell into her hands, she took as much pains to extirpate the black hairs, as the other had done to demolish the grey. They neither of them knew of the other's design; but each continuing her project with repeated industry, the poor man, who thought their desire to oblige, put them upon this extraordinary officiousness in dressing his head, found himself in a short time, without any hair at all

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Phædrus is a little severe upon the ladies; and tells us, that by this example we may see, that the men are sure to be the losers by the women, as well when they are objects of their love, as while they lie under their displeasure. Many women may unfortunately, out of a pure effect of complaisance, do a thousand disagreeable things to their husbands. They whose love is tempered with a tolerable share of good sense, will be sure to have no separate views of their own, nor do any thing more immediately relating to their husband without consulting him first. In a married state, one party should inform themselves certainly, and not be guessing and presuming what will please the other; and if a wife uses her husband like a friend only, the least she can do, is, first to communicate to him all the important enterprises she undertakes, and especially those which she intends should be for his honour and advantage.

THE DECOY-BIRD

A BIRD-CATCHER had spread his net, and fixed his decoy-bird, which was a very sweet songster. The birds in the vicinity, attracted by his chaunt, repaired to the spot, and said to each other, "What a superfluity of food is here! how kind it is of this stranger, who is so well provided for, to invite us to partake of his abundance. It would be wrong to omit such an opportunity." They immediately descended, were entrapped in the net, and lost their liberty and life.—One bird, more cautious than the rest, kept at a distance. "Who," said the decoy-bird, "made you so much wiser than your companions?"—"My father," replied the other: "he often told me, when a great advantage was held out, for little or no purchase, to be cautious, for some deception was sure to lurk behind."

THE CONSULTATION OF TRADESMEN.

THERE was a town in danger of being besieged, and a consultation was held as to the best way of fortifying and strengthening the same.

A grave, skilful mason said, there was nothing so strong nor so good as stone. A carpenter said, that stone might do pretty well, but in his opinion, good strong oak was much better.

A currier being present, said, "Gentlemen, you may do as you please; but if you have a mind to have the town well fortified and secure, take my word for it, there is nothing like leather."

It is too common for men to consult their own private ends, though a whole nation suffer by it. Their own profit and emolument is all they aim at, notwithstanding they often undo themselves by betraying and undoing others.

THE BIRDS CHOOSING A KING.

IT once happened that a flight of birds assembled to choose a king; and every different species among them put in his pretensions to the crown. At length, however, there were several that gave their voices for the owl, because Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, had made choice of him as her peculiar bird: but a vast number of others being strenuous in their resolution never to obey so deformed a creature, the diet broke up, and they fell one upon another with so much fury, that several on all sides were slain. The fight, however, probably would have lasted longer than it did, had not a certain bird, in order to part them, bethought himself of crying out to the combatants, "No more civil wars; why do you spill one another's blood in vain, here is a raven coming; let us all agree to make him our judge and arbitrator; he is a person of judgment, and whose years have gained him experience." The birds unanimously consented to this: and when the raven arrived, and had informed himself of the occasion of the quarrel, he thus delivered himself: "Are you such fools and madmen, gentlemen," said he, "to choose for your king a bird, that draws after him nothing but misfortune? Will you set up a fly instead of a griffin? Why do you not rather make choice of a falcon, who is eminent for his courage and agility? or a peacock, who treads with a majestic gait, and carries a train of starry eyes in his tail? Why do you not rather raise an eagle to the throne, who is the emblem of royalty; or, lastly, a griffin, who only by the motion and noise of his wings makes the mountains tremble? But though there were no such birds as these that I have named in the world, surely it were better for you to live without a king, than subject yourselves to such a horrid creature as an owl; for though he has the physiognomy of a cat, he has no wit; and, what is yet more insupportable, notwithstanding that he is so abominably ugly, he is as proud as a fine lady at a public feast: and what ought, if possible, to render him yet more despicable in our eyes, he hates the light of that magnificent body that enlivens all nature. Therefore, gentlemen, lay aside a design so prejudicial to your honour, proceed to the election of another king, and do nothing that you may hereafter repent."



THE FIGHTING COCKS AND THE EAGLE.

THE FIGHTING COCKS AND THE EAGLE.

Two cocks were fighting for the sovereignty of the dunghill; when one of them having got the better of the other, he that was vanquished crept into a hole, and hid himself for some time; but the victor flew to the top of a neighbouring barn, clapped his wings, and crowed out "Victory." An eagle who was watching for his prey near the place, saw him, and making a stoop, trussed him in his talons, and carried him off. The cock that had been beaten, perceiving this, soon quitted his hole, and shaking off all remembrance of his late disgrace, gallanted the hens with all the intrepidity imaginable.

This Fable shews the impropriety and inconvenience of running into extremes. Much of our happiness depends upon keeping an even balance in our words and actions, in not suffering the scale of our reason to mount us too high in the time of prosperity, nor to sink us too low with the weight of adverse fortune.

It is a question—Which shews people in the most contemptible light, exulting immoderately upon a fresh accession of good, or being too abjectly cast down at the sudden approach of evil? We are apt to form our notions of the man from the stability of his temper in this respect, and account him a brave or a wise man, according to the proportion of equanimity which he exerts upon any change of his condition. But though our reputation were no ways concerned in the case, and a man were not to be reckoned a coxcomb for being elated, or a coward for being dejected with the vicissitudes of life, yet the true regard of our own private satisfaction should incline us to play the philosopher, and learn to keep our spirits calm and even; because life would be a labyrinth of perplexities without it. One sudden turn would come so thick upon the back of another, that we should be bewildered in the quick succession of joys and terrors, without having so much as a quiet moment to ourselves.

THE TRAVELLERS.

In search of science, far from home,
Two gallant youths resolv'd to roam;
Joyous, from town to town they stray'd,
This spot admir'd, that scene survey'd,
Till weary grown, by hunger prest,
They sought an inn to sup and rest.
Awhile a lowly village round
They pac'd, but no asylum found.
Disclosing then their rank and name,
Two gentlemen obsequious came,
And offer'd each, in terms polite,
A habitation for the night;
Which readily embrac'd, content
Each homeward with his patron went.
Lo! to a mansion one retir'd,
Whose outward structure he admir'd;
Rich turrets rear'd on every side,
And battlements of ancient pride;
And numerous vassals rob'd in state,
Bespoke the owner rich and great.

The other to a cot withdrew,
Lowly, but pleasing to the view;
Nothing without was gorgeous seen,
But all was neat and clean within:
And though its owner was no lord,
Some cates luxurious deck'd his board:—
And having pass'd some hours in chat,
This topic scann'd, exhausted that,
The jolly host, now flush'd his nose,
Reel'd with his guest to sweet repose.
But in the mansion, strange to tell,
Meanness and pomp were seen to dwell;
Sad was the hungry pilgrim's fare,
Yet served with ceremonious air;
The chamber, filthy to behold,
Ill mantled, comfortless, and cold;
And while to usher him to bed,
Three half-starved knaves their master led,
The trav'ler wished his host less vain,
And more secure his room from rain.
Anon, as broke the blushing dawn,
The travellers met upon a lawn,
Blithesome the one arose, refresh'd,
Good was his fare and sweet his rest.
The other jaded, vex'd, declar'd,
Nor food, nor slumber had he shar'd;
For where he lodg'd all was deceit,
Though in exterior so complete.

THE ASS AND THE FLUTE.

As an ass was quietly dining on thistles, he beheld a shepherd seated beneath a tree, awakening sweet echoes on his flute, and charming the ears of all within hearing: excepting our discontented lop-eared brute, who thus soliloquized: "The world is going mad! Behold all the people admiring, with open mouths, a fool who is straining and puffing himself into a perspiration with blowing into a little hollow tube. So easily are mankind pleased, while I—but no matter. Let me hasten out of the fool's hearing. I shall go mad." As our scandalized ass was moving off at a brisk canter, he presently almost kicked against a flute, which chanced to have been left on the turf by an amorous shepherd. The ass stopped, gazed knowingly round, and contemplated the flute as it lay; slowly he lowered his head, and placing his under lip on the mouth-hole, he blew into the despised instrument, when, *mirabile dictu*, it yielded an agreeable sound. Our ass thought himself a clever fellow, and cried aloud, as he kicked his hind legs in the air with joy, "Bravo! I too can play on the flute!"

THE TRAVELLED ANIMALS.

The prattling parrot, monkey sly,
And beaver skill'd in masonry,
From a survey of human kind,
Th' assembly of the beasts rejoin'd.
Deputed thence, they had been sent.
To learn how men their powers augment,
And, strength creating by address,
Supply their native feebleness.
Then to the senate each display'd
Acquirements which his zeal had made.
The parrot, proud to speak like man,
An endless, senseless rant began
Of rhimes detach'd, which, void of rule,
From lord and clown—in hall and school,
Without connection, scope, or meaning,
The brainless creature had been gleaning.
The monkey next began to prate,
Or rather to gesticulate :
He bow'd to all with quaint grimace,
The pink, he thought, of Gallic grace :
Then figur'd off a ballet scene,
With courtly and conceited mien ;
His head in amorous languor hung,
And leering glances round him flung.
The modest beaver next display'd
His progress in the builder's trade.
For all the zeal he could exert
Was bent to learn this useful art.
But, since no other tools he shew'd
Then those his kind to nature ow'd,
'Twas beavers only could reduce
His studies and his plans to use.
No profit thence the rest obtain'd
But from the whole this maxim gain'd ;
The eyes of travellers to suspect,
And such details from them expect,
As the peculiar taste of each,
His talents, and his habits reach.
This rule should further still extend,
And all observers comprehend ;
For universally we find
'Tis well we keep it in our mind.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE RATS.

A HUSBANDMAN had a barn full of corn, which he carefully kept locked up; not far from this lived a rat, who laboured long on every side of it, endeavouring to make a hole somewhere to creep in at. After great trouble, he at length found his way into the barn, and when he had thoroughly filled his belly, amazed at the vast treasures which he saw himself master of, away he ran, full of joy, and gave notice of it to a multitude of other rats, his neighbours; telling them of his immense riches, but carefully concealing the place where they lay. On the news of his good fortune, all the rats of the neighbouring villages presently flocked about him, and made him a thousand offers of their service, scraping and cringing to him, and soothing him in all the excursions of his fantastic humour. The fool, taking all this for reality, grew very proud and stately, as believing himself to be some extraordinary person; and never considering that this magazine was not to last always, began most extravagantly to play the prodigal at the poor husbandman's cost, treating his companions and flatterers every day with as much as they could cram. At this juncture, there happened in the same country so terrible a famine, that the poor cried out for bread, while the rats lay wallowing in plenty. The husbandman now believing it time to make the best of his corn, opened his barn-door; but finding a most unexpected consumption of his store, he fell into a passion, and presently removed what he had to another place. The rat, who looked upon himself to be sole master in the barn, was then asleep, but his parasites were awake, and seeing the husbandman go and come, soon began to fear there was something the matter, and that they should by-and-by be murdered for their monstrous robberies: upon this they betook themselves every one to flight, leaving the poor cullied rat fast asleep, not one of them having gratitude enough to give him the least hint of the danger that threatened him.

This is the practice of your smell-feast friends: while you keep a plentiful table they are your most humble and obedient servants, but when the accommodation fails, like Tartars they seek for other pastures, and leave you to destruction.

THE BEE AND THE COQUETTE.

CHLOE, young, handsome, and a decided coquette, laboured very hard every morning on rising; people say it was at her toilet; and there, smiling and smirking, she related to her dear confidant all her pains, her pleasures, and the projects of her soul.

A thoughtless bee, entering her chamber, began buzzing about. "Help! help!" immediately shrieked the lady. "Lizzy, Mary, here make haste; drive away this winged monster"

The insolent insect settling on Chloe's lips, she fainted: and Mary, furiously seizing the bee, prepared to crush it.

"Alas!" gently exclaimed the unfortunate insect, "forgive my error; Chloe's mouth seemed to me a rose, and as such I kissed it."

This speech restored Chloe to her senses: "Let us forgive it," said she, "on account of its candid confession! Besides its sting is but a trifle; since it has spoken to you, I have scarcely felt it."

What may one not effect by a little well-timed flattery?

THE LAND OF THE HALT.

MANY years since in a small territory, there was not one of the inhabitants who did not stutter when he spoke, and halt in walking; both these defects moreover, were considered accomplishments. A stranger saw the evil, and thinking how they would admire his walking, went about without halting, after the usual manner of our race. Every one stopped to look at him, and all those who looked, laughed, and holding their sides to repress their merriment, shouted: "Teach the stranger how to walk properly!"

The stranger considered it his duty to cast the reproach from himself. "You halt," he cried, "it is not I, you must accustom yourselves to leave off so awkward a habit!" This only increased the uproar, when they heard him speak; he did not even stammer; this was sufficient to disgrace him, and he was laughed at throughout the country.

Habit will render faults which we have been accustomed to regard from youth, beautiful; in vain will a stranger attempt to convince us, that we are in error. We look upon him as a madman, solely because he is wiser than ourselves.

THE FOAL.

A FOAL, that had never felt the rider's weight, looked upon the bridle and saddle as marks of great distinction. Under this impression, it ran after every horse, upon which it saw a man astride, and sighed inwardly for the same honour. How rarely do those who strive for fame, know what they long for.

At length the envied trappings were placed upon our foal; and it was gently led here and there, in order that it might accustom itself to the curb. The foal strutted proudly up and down, and was in excellent humour with itself.

Elate with its new honours, it returned to its stall, and neighing, made all the horses acquainted with its good fortune. "I was praised by all who saw me," it said to the nearest horse, "a red bridle came out of my mouth, hanging gracefully over my black mane."

But how was it the next day? The foal came sorrowfully back, covered with perspiration, and said: "What a plague is this fancied happiness. True, the bridle serves to decorate me, but it was not made for that; it was invented for my rider's convenience, and to ensure my submission to slavery."

THE FOX AND THE BRAMBLE.

A FOX closely pursued by a pack of dogs, took shelter under the covert of a bramble. He rejoiced in this asylum, and for a while was very happy; but soon found, that if he attempted to stir, he was wounded by thorns and prickles on every side. However, making a virtue of necessity, he forbore to complain; and comforted himself with reflecting that no bliss is perfect; that good and evil are mixed, and flow from the same fountain. "These briars indeed," will tear my skin a little, yet they keep off the dogs. For the sake of the good then, let me bear the evil with patience; each bitter has its sweets, and these brambles, though they wound my flesh, preserve my life from danger."

THE TWO THRUSHES.

A SAGE old thrush was once discipling
His grandson thrush, a hair-brain'd stripling,
In the purveying art. He knew,
He said, where vines in plenty grew,
Whose fruit delicious when he'd come
He might attack *ad libitum*.
"Ha!" said the young one, "where's this vine-
Let's see this fruit you think so fine."
"Come then, my child, your fortune's great, you
Can't conceive what feasts await you!"
He said, and gliding through the air
They reached a vine, and halted there.
Soon as the grapes the youngster spied,
"Is this the fruit you praise?" he cried:
"Why, an old bird, Sir, as you are,
Should judge, I think, more wisely far
Than to admire, or hold as good,
Such half-grown, small, and worthless food.
Come, see a fruit which I possess
In yonder garden; you'll confess,
When you behold it, that it is
Bigger and better far than this."
"I'll go," he said, "but ere I see
This fruit of your's, whate'er it be,
I'm sure it is not worth a stone,
Or grape-skin from my vines alone."
They reached the spot the thrushlet named,
And he triumphantly exclaimed—
"Shew me the fruit to equal mine!
A size so great—a shape so fine;
What luxury, however rare,—
Can e'en your grapes with *this* compare?"
The old bird stared, as well he might,
For lo! a *pumpkin* met his sight!
Now that a thrush should take this fancy,
Without much marvelling I can see;—
But it is truly monstrous, when
Men, who are held as learned men,
All books, whate'er they be, despise,
Unless of largest bulk and size.
A book is great, if good at all,—
If bad—it cannot be too small.

THE DERVISE, THE FALCON, AND THE RAVEN.

A DERVISE used to relate, that in his youth once passing through a wood, and admiring the works of the great Author of Nature, he spied a falcon that held a piece of flesh in his beak; and hovering about a tree, tore the flesh into bits, and gave it to a young raven that lay bald and featherless in its nest. The dervise admiring the bounty of providence, in a rapture of admiration, cried out, "Behold this poor biped, that is not able to seek out sustenance for himself, is not, however, forsaken of its Creator, who spreads the whole world like a table, where all creatures have their food ready provided for them! He extends his liberality so far, that the serpent finds wherewith to live upon the mountain of Gahen. Why then am I so greedy, and wherefore do I run to the ends of the earth, and plough up the ocean for bread? Is it not better that I should henceforward confine myself in repose to some little corner, and abandon myself to fortune?" Upon this he retired to his cell, where, without putting himself to any further trouble for any thing in the world, he remained three days and three nights without victuals. At last, "Servant of mine," said the Creator to him in a dream, "know thou that all things in this world have their causes: and though my providence can never be limited, my wisdom requires that men shall make use of the means that I have ordained them. If thou wouldst imitate any one of the birds thou hast seen, to my glory, use the talents I have given thee, and imitate the falcon that feeds the raven, and not the raven that lies a sluggard in his nest, and expects his food from another."

THE RAT-CATCHER AND THE CATS.

THE rats by night such mischief did.
Betty was ev'ry morning chid:
They undermin'd whole sides of bacon;
Her cheese was sapp'd, her tarts were taken;
Her pasties, fenc'd with thickest paste,
Were all demolish'd and laid waste.
She curs'd the cat for want of duty,
Who left her foes a constant booty.
An engineer of noted skill
Engag'd to stop the growing ill.
From room to room he now surveys
Their haunts, their works, their secrets ways;
Finds where they 'scape an ambuscade,
And whence the nightly sally's made.
An envious cat from place to place,
Unseen, attends his silent pace.
She saw that if his trade went on,
The purring race must be undone;
So secretly removes his baits,
And ev'ry stratagem defeats.

Again he sets the poison'd toils,
And Puss again the labour foils.
"What foe, to frustrate my design,
My schemes thus nightly countermines?"
Incens'd, he cries: "this very hour
The wretch shall bleed beneath my pow'r."
So said—a pond'rous trap he brought,
And in the fact poor Puss was caught.
"Smuggler," says he, "thou shalt be made
A victim to our loss of trade."
The captive cat, with piteous mews,
For pardon, life, and freedom sues.
"A sister of the science spare;
One int'rest is our common care."
"What insolence!" the man replied;
"Shall cats with us the game divide?
Were all your interloping band
Extinguish'd or expell'd the land,
We rat-catchers might raise our fees,
Sole guardians of a nation's cheese!"
A cat, who saw the lifted knife,
Thus spoke and sav'd her sister's life:
"In ev'ry age and clime, we see
Two of a trade can ne'er agree.
Each hates his neighbour for encroaching.
Squire stigmatises squire for poaching
Beauties with beauties are in arms,
And scandal pelts each other's charms;
Kings too their neighbour kings dethrone,
In hope to make the world their own.
But let us limit our desires;
Not war like beauties, kings, and squires;
For tho' we both one prey pursue,
There's game enough for us and you."

THE MUSICAL WOLF.

A LAMB having been left out of the fold, perceived a wolf that was advancing in order to devour him; seeing himself in distress, "Unhappy fate!" said he, "cruel wolf! must I always be thy prey? but in order that I may die contented, and that death may not appear so terrible, I beg of thee before thou devourest me, to play upon this flute." The unsuspecting robber began to play; when the dogs thinking it was the shepherd, came running at the sound of the instrument; and espying the wolf, secured him. Turning towards the lamb, "I have well deserved this fate," said he, "for pretending to turn musician, when I was only a butcher."



THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

A fox made friendship with a goat :—
A journey they agreed to take together
O'er heath and mountain.
His horns were high, and shaggy was his coat,
'Twas summer-time, and very sultry weather.
In all their route, no river, lake,
Or brook occurr'd their thirst to slake,
Or bubbling fountain :
But to a well at length their fortune brought 'em,
Whose rocky sides had water at the bottom.

Thirst will, like hunger brave stone walls,
In storms will any harbour welcome seem.
Down they both leap.—
Eager to drink each weary pilgrim falls,
And quaffs with glee the pure but scanty stream,
Which from the rock in liquid crystal ran.
"Friend," said the fox, "d'ye think you can
Climb up this steep ?
To come down here was wise beyond a doubt,
But it will still be wiser to get out."

The goat had nothing to propose,
Nor could his hoofs the humid dungeon scale,
Being rather heavy ;
Poor long-beard seldom look'd beyond his nose.
"I have thought of something which can hardly fail
Said the sly fox, "if long we stay
Some shepherd, who may stroll this way,
Will raise a levy,
And hurling on our heads a shower of stones,
Will leave us here to die with broken bones.

"Quick your fore-feet against the side extend ;
Form with your person an inclining plane,
And hold your head high.
Then, by that slope I can with ease ascend :
From off your horns a spring the top will gain.
Thus when I've fairly reach'd the brink,
And you are satisfied with drink,
I shall be ready
To give my friend below a helping hand.—
What think you of the scheme my brain has plann'd ?"

"Now by my beard," the goat replied,
"'Tis excellent! how rare a thing
In all distresses
'Tis to have wits in which you can confide!"
Up scrambled Renard with an active spring.
Then to his comrade with a grin
Said, "I much fear you'll pull me in—
And bus'ness presses.
You'll find some other means to get away;
I'm sorry time will not permit my stay."

Thus when a mob would mend the State,
By artful demagogues' incitements stirr'd
To fatal fury,
The blockheads blindly rush upon their fate,
The cunning mover, neither seen or heard,
When happily his projects fail,
Leaves his poor tools to meet the jail,
The judge and jury,
Who hang these clumsy cobblers of the nation,
Pathetic subject for some new oration.

THE MOLE AND THE RABBITS.

Most of us are aware of some of our defects, but to avow them is quite another matter; we prefer the endurance of real evils, rather than confess that we are afflicted with them. I recollect to have been witness to a fact very difficult of belief, but not the less applicable to what has just been asserted.

One fine moonlight evening, several rabbits were amusing themselves on the turf with playing at blindman's buff. Rabbits! you exclaim, the thing is impossible. Nothing, however, is more true; a pliant leaf was placed over the eyes of one, like a bandage, and then tied under the neck; it was done in an instant. He whom the riband deprived of light, placed himself in the centre; the others leapt and danced round him, performing miracles; now running away, then coming close, and pulling his ears or his tail. The poor blind man, turning suddenly round, throws out his paws, hap-hazard; but the flock quickly get out of his reach, and he seizes nothing but air; in vain does he torment himself, he would remain there till to-morrow. A stupid mole, who had heard the noise in her earthy dweling, coming out of her hole, joined the party. You may imagine that being blind she was immediately caught.

"Gentlemen," said a rabbit, "it would not be fair play to blindfold our sister; we must let her off, she has no eyes and cannot help herself."—"By no means," sharply replied the mole, "I am caught fairly; put on the bandage."—"Willingly my dear, here it is; but I think it will be unnecessary to tie the knot tightly." "Excuse me, sir," replied the mole angrily, "tie it very tightly, I can see. —That is not tight enough, I can still see!"

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

A countryman had a rose-bush in his garden, which he made his sole pleasure and delight. Every morning he went to look upon it, in the season of its flowering and see its roses ready to blow. One day as he was admiring, according to his custom, the beauty of the flowers, he spied a nightingale perched upon one of the branches near a very fine flower and plucking off the leaves of it one after another. This put him into so great a passion, that the next day he laid a snare for the nightingale, in revenge for the wrong; in which he succeeded so well, that he took the bird, and immediately put her in a cage. The nightingale, very melancholy to see herself in that condition, with a mournful voice asked the countryman the reason of her slavery. To whom he replied, "Knowest thou not that my whole delight was in those flowers, which thou wast wantonly destroying? every leaf that thou pluckedst from that rose, was as a drop of blood from my heart."—"Alas!" replied the nightingale, "you use me very severely for having cropped a few leaves from a rose; you must expect, therefore, to be used harshly in the other world, for afflicting me in this manner; for there all people are used after the same manner as they here use the other animals." The countryman, moved with these words, gave the nightingale her liberty again; for which she, willing to thank him, said, "Since you have had compassion in your nature, and have done me this favour, I will repay your kindness in the manner it deserves. Know therefore," continued she, "that, at the foot of yonder tree, there lies buried a pot full of gold; go and take it, and Heaven bless you with it." The countryman dug about the tree, and, finding the pot, astonished at the nightingale's sagacity in discovering it; "I wonder," said he to her, "that, being able to see this pot, which was buried under the ground, you could not discover the net that was spread for your captivity?"—"Know you not," replied the nightingale, "that, however sharp-sighted or prudent we are, we cannot always escape our destiny?"

THE FOX AND THE HEN.

A fox, who was eagerly searching about for something to appease his hunger, at length spied a hen, that was busy scratching the earth and picking up worms at the foot of a tree. Upon the same tree there also hung a drum, which made a noise every now and then, the branches being moved by the violence of the wind, and beating upon it. The fox was just going to spring upon the hen, and make amends for a long fast, when he first heard the noise of the drum. "Oh ho," quoth he, looking up, "are you there? I will be with you by-and-by: that body, whatever it be, I promise myself must certainly have more flesh upon it than a sorry hen; so saying, he clambered up the tree, and in the mean while his intended victim made her escape. The greedy and famished fox seized his prey, and fell to work upon it with his teeth and claws. But when he had torn off the head of the drum, and found there was nothing within but an empty cavity; air instead of good garbage, fetching a deep sigh; "Unfortunate wretch that I am," cried he, "what a delicate morsel have I lost, only for the show of a large bellyful!"

THE SCORPION AND THE TORTOISE.

A TORTOISE and scorpion had contracted a great intimacy, and bound themselves with such ties of friendship, that the one could not live without the other. These inseparable companions, one day, finding themselves obliged to change their habitation, travelled together; but in their way meeting with a large and deep river, the scorpion making a stop, said to the tortoise, "My dear friend, you are well provided for what we see before us, but how shall I get over this water?"—"Never trouble yourself, my dear friend, for that," replied the tortoise; "I will carry you upon my back secure from all danger." The scorpion, on this, without hesitation, got upon the back of the tortoise, who immediately took water and began to swim. But he was hardly got half way across the river, when he heard a terrible rumbling upon his back; which made him ask the scorpion what he was doing? "Doing!" replied the scorpion, "why I am whetting my sting, to try whether I can bore this horny cuirass of yours, that covers your flesh like a shield, from all injuries."—"Oh, ungrateful wretch!" cried the tortoise; "wouldst thou, at a time when I am giving thee such a demonstration of my friendship, wouldst thou at such a time, pierce with thy venomous sting the defence that Nature has given me, and take away my life? It is well, however, I have it in my power, both to save myself, and reward thee as thou deservest." So saying, he sunk his back to some depth under water, threw off the scorpion, and left him to pay with his life, the just forfeit of his monstrous ingratitude.

THE TWO FISHERMEN AND THE THREE FISHES.

IN a pond, the water of which was very clear, and emptied itself into a neighbouring river, were three fishes; the one of which was prudent, the second had but little wit, and the third was a mere fool. Two fishermen in their walks, perceiving this pond, made up to it, and no sooner observed these fishes, which were large and fat, than they went and fetched their nets to take them. The fishes suspecting, by what they saw of the fishermen, that they intended no less than their destruction, began to be in a world of terror. The prudent fish immediately resolved what course to take: he threw himself out of the pond, through the little channel that opened into the river, and so made his escape. The next morning, the two fishermen returned; they made it their business to stop up all the passages, to prevent the fishes from getting out, and were making preparations for taking them. The half-witted fish now heartily repented that he had not followed his companion: at length, however, be bethought himself of a stratagem; he appeared upon the surface of the water with his belly upward, and feigned to be dead. The fishermen also, having taken him up, thought him really what he counterfeited himself to be, so threw him again into the water. And the last, which was the foolish fish, seeing himself pressed by the fishermen, sunk to the bottom of the pond, shifted up and down from place to place, but could not avoid at last falling into their hands, and was that day made part of a public entertainment.

THE DOG IN THE MANGER.

A DOG was lying upon a manger full of hay; an ox, being hungry, came near and offered to eat of it; but the envious, ill-natured cur, getting up and snarling at him, would not suffer him to touch a morsel; upon which the ox, in the bitterness of his heart, said, " A curse light on thee, for a malicious wretch, who wilt neither eat the hay thyself, nor suffer others to do it."

Envy is the most unnatural and unaccountable of all the passions, for the stronger it is, the greater is the torment; it is an anxiety rising in our minds, upon our observing accomplishments in others which we want ourselves, and can never receive any true comfort, unless in a deluge, a conflagration, a plague, or some general calamity that should befal mankind; for, as long as there is a creature living, that enjoys its being happily within the envious man's sphere, it will afford nourishment to his distempered mind: but such nourishment as will make him only pine and fret, and emaciate himself.

THE GOOSE AND THE GOLDFINCH.

A GOOSE, with other poultry fed,
Inhabiting a farm-yard shed;
So vile a bird was never seen,
Her nest was litter'd and unclean:
If she had eggs, 'twould sure befal
She'd overlay and smash them all:
Or, if she ever hatched a brood,
She let them die for want of food:
Besides all this, from morn till night
She ate with monstrous appetite,
And yet, for all her stuffing in,
She still was nought but bone and skin:
To sell her for the smallest gain,
The farmer having tried in vain—
For none to buy a bird was willing,
That was not even worth the killing—
He turned her out, one dreary night,
To seek her fortune as she might.
The goose, ere long, began to feel
The want of her accustom'd meal,
When, as she wander'd on, she heard
The voice of a melodious bird,
Who, with some others, sang a lay
In honour of the dawning day.
" Ha," mused the goose, " the thought will do-
Why should not I turn singer too?
No doubt my voice is sweet enough,
And art, and science are all stuff! "
Waddling to where the songster stood,
She'd sing all day, she said, for food;

Spoke of her lovely voice, and then
Gave a long hiss, as specimen.
A sober goldfinch was at hand,
Who on that day had led the band :
" Fool that thou art," he said " to think
Upon such terms, to eat and drink.
What !—thou—a goose in ev'ry thing—
Dare to presume with us to sing,
Why there's no art, be what it will,
Demands such genius and skill.
Leave us to sing alone, I pray,
And seek thy food some other way."
How many without power or worth
For any useful end on earth,
When every other hope has past,
Resort to poetry at last;
As if *that* only can dispense
With talent, skill, and common sense !
This tale to such may be of use—
Let them take warning by the goose ;
Consider what the goldfinch said,
And seek some other way their bread.

THE LION AND THE RABBIT.

In a very delightful meadow, where several wild beasts had taken up their habitations, by reason of the pleasantness of the place, was a furious lion, who disturbed the peace of all the rest by his continual murders. In order to remedy this dreadful evil, one day they all met together, to wait upon the lion, and lay their case before him, saying that they were his subjects, and in consequence, that it no way became him to make, every day, such dreadful slaughters among them, of whole families together. "You seek after us," added they, " to rule over us; but though we are proud of a king of so much valour, yet our fear makes us avoid you : would you live peaceably with us, and enjoy your quiet, by letting us alone, we would bring you every morning sufficient and delicate food, nor should you ever want to crown your meals a sufficiency of tame and wild fowl, and you should yourself never be put to the toil of hunting." The lion readily accepted this proposal; and the beasts cast lots every morning, and he upon whom the lot fell, was appointed to hunt for the lion.

One day the lot fell upon a rabbit; who seeing he could not avoid it, after he had summoned all the beasts together, said to them, " You see how miserable a life it is we lead here, either we must be eaten ourselves, or spend our labour to feed a churlish master. Now hear what I have to propose ; do you but stand by me, and I will certainly deliver you from this cruel tyrant that reigns over us."

To this they all unanimously answered, that they would do their utmost. Upon this, the rabbit stayed in his hole till the hour of dinner was past, and made no provision for the lion. By this time the monarch's anger augmented with his appetite; he lashed the ground with his tail, and at length perceiving the rabbit, "Whence come you," said he, "and what are my subjects doing? Do they suppose I accepted their proposal, and spared their lives, to be kept without victuals by their idleness? Be assured, if I wait much longer, they shall, all of them, severely pay for it."—"May it please your Majesty to hear me," answered the rabbit, bowing to him with profound respect: "your subjects, sacred sir, have not been wanting in their duty; they sent me hither to bring your majesty your accustomed provision; but I met a lion by the way, who took it from me. I told him, when he seized it, that it was for the king: to which he most insolently answered, that there was no other king in this country but himself. Struck dumb with this monstrous behaviour, I left him, and ran to inform your Majesty of this heinous piece of insolence." The lion, on this, furiously turning about his burning eyes, cried out, "Who is this audacious usurper that dares to lay his paw upon my food, which my subjects had laboured to provide for me? Canst thou shew me where the audacious traitor lives?"—"Yes sire," replied the rabbit, "if you will be pleased to follow me."

The lion breathing revenge and destruction, followed the wily rabbit; and when they came to a well that was full of clear water, "Sir," said the rabbit, "your enemy lives in this well; I dare not shew him you, but only be pleased to look in yourself, and you will see him: have a care, however, that you are not first assailed." With that the lion went stalking to the well; and seeing the reflection of his own image, which he took to be another lion in the water, that had devoured his food, inflamed with anger, he flung himself into the well to encounter this mortal foe, and was himself drowned.

COLIN'S FLOCK.

At the break of day, Colin, a young shepherd, with a fine flock, leaving the hamlet, led them to pasture. On the road he finds a brook swollen to a torrent by a fearful storm on the preceding night; how was he to pass this water? Dog, sheep and shepherd all halted on the bank. By making a circuit they could reach the bridge, that would be the safest; but then it was the longest road; Colin wished to shorten the distance. At first he considers whether he can clear the stream, and, as his rams are strong, he concludes, that without great effort the flock can jump over. This being decided, he springs across; his dog leaps after him; the rams follow; bravo! well done! after the rams come the ewes. Colin encourages them and they jump pretty well; but now come the lambs, the old ones, the weak, the fearful, the mutinous, always a large body, who refuse to jump, or do so unwillingly; and either from weakness or malice fall into the stream. In this manner a fourth of the flock was drowned: another fourth fled, and became a prey to the wolf. Colin, driven to despair, perceived when too late, that for a good shepherd, the shortest road is not always the best.

THE GREAT AND SMALL BELL.

In a cathedral tower, there hung
A mighty sounding bell, that rung
On high and solemn days alone,
In slowest time and deepest tone,
Nor did it tolling ever go
Beyond a dozen strokes or so;
For this and for its size and sound,
Its fame had spread the country round.
Within the city's bounds was rated
A hamlet poorly populated,
With a poor church decay'd by age
And belfry like a hermitage;
A small crack'd bell performing there
The most important character.
The villagers who wished to have
Chimes equal those the great bell gave,
Resolv'd the crack'd and jingling thing
Should likewise slow and seldom ring,
'Till with the country-folks at last
The small bell for a great bell pass'd!
Likely enough—grave looks alone
Oft veil a fool, and many a one
Scarce deigns to ope his lips, and tries
In such a way to ape the wise.

THE HUNTER, THE FOX AND THE LEOPARD.

A hunter espied in the middle of a field, a fox, who looked with so engaging an aspect, and had a skin so fair and lovely, that he had a great desire to take him alive. With this intent he found out his hole, and just before the entrance to it dug a very deep trench, which he covered with slender twigs and straw, and having laid on it a piece of smoking lamb's flesh, just cut up, went and hid himself in a corner out of sight. The fox, returning to his hole, and observing at a distance what the hunter had left for his breakfast, presently ran to see what dainty morsel it was. When he came to the trench, he would fain have been tasting the delicate entertainment; but the fear of some treachery would not permit him to fall to; and, in short, finding he had strong reasons to suspect some ill design towards him, he was cunning enough to remove his lodging, and take up other quarters. In a moment after he was gone, as fortune would have it, came a hungry leopard, who, being tempted by the savoury odour of the yet warm and smoking flesh, made such haste to fall to, that he tumbled into the trench. The hunter, hearing the noise of the falling leopard, immediately threw himself into the trench, without looking into it, never questioning but that it was the fox he had taken; but there found, instead of him, the leopard, who tore him in pieces, and devoured him.



THE WOLF TURNED SHEPHERD.

THE WOLF TURNED SHEPHERD.

Designing hypocrites frequently lay themselves open to discovery, by over-acting their parts.

A wolf, who by frequent visits to a flock of sheep in his neighbourhood, began to be extremely well known to them, thought it expedient, for the more successfully carrying on his depredations, to appear in a new character. To this end he disguised himself in a shepherd's habit; and resting his fore-feet upon a stick which served him by way of crook, he softly made his approach towards the fold. It happened that the shepherd and his dog were both of them extended on the grass, fast asleep; so that he would certainly have succeeded in his project, if he had not imprudently attempted to imitate the shepherd's voice. The horrid noise awakened them both; when the wolf encumbered with his disguise, and finding it impossible either to resist or to flee, yielded up his life an easy prey to the shepherd's dog.

THE DOG.

Phylax who by night and day had so faithfully watched the house, and by his barking resisted whole troops of robbers, was suddenly attacked by a fever.

All the neighbours offered their advice. The dog must make up his mind to swallow pine-oil and blue pills; but with little apparent benefit; even the skill of the landlord of the neighbouring public-house, who had formerly practised abroad as a physician, was of no avail with the beast.

Scarcely was the news made public, when all his brethren and acquaintance leaving their dinners, hastened to visit the afflicted Phylax Pantaloon, his best friend, licked his parched lips. " O wretched hour," he sighed, " who could be prepared for so great a calamity?"—"Alas! my dear Pantaloon," said Phylax, " I am dying, is it not so? Had I taken none of their vile drugs, I might perhaps have escaped. Should I expire, you may safely attribute the cause of my decease to the physic I have been compelled to swallow. I should meet my fate with resignation, if I could only enjoy the numerous bones I have buried! It is this makes me regret life; that I should forget this treasure; neither eat it before my end, nor take it with me. Do you love and are you still faithful to me? if so, fetch me them here; you will find one of them under the linden by the garden gate; another, dear Pantaloon, did I hide but yesterday in the barn; but restrain your appetite, and bring them to me untouched."

Pantaloon departed, and faithfully conveyed what he found to his dying friend. Phylax feebly smelt his property; at length, as his sight began to fail, he said: "Let it all lie here; if I die it shall be your own, but not till then, brother. Should I be so fortunate as to be able to enjoy the beautiful ham-bone that I—no, I'll not reveal where it is hidden; but if I recover, I promise you the best half of it; yes, you shall—" Here Phylax gave up the ghost.

The miser remains unchanged till death. He casts a single look towards the grave, but a thousand anxious glances are bestowed on the carefully hoarded treasure. O wretched vanity! Man seeks the acquirement of wealth, in order to live badly, and to expire in agony; such a fate envy truly merits.

THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

An oyster, cast upon the shore,
Was heard, though never heard before,
Complaining in a speech well worded,
And worthy thus to be recorded:—
"Ah, hapless wretch! condemned to dwell
For ever in my native shell;
Ordained to move when others please,
Not for my own content or ease:
But tossed and buffeted about,
Now in the water, and now out.
'Twere better to be born a stone,
Of ruder shape, and feeling none,
Than with a tenderness like mine,
And sensibilities so fine!
I envy that unfeeling shrub,
Fast rooted against every rub."
The plant he meant grew not far off,
And felt the sneer with scorn enough,
Was hurt, disgusted, mortified,
And with asperity replied.
When, cry the botanists, and stare,
Did plants called sensitive grow there?
No matter when—a poet's muse is
To make them grow just where he chooses.
"You shapeless nothing in a dish,
You that are but almost a fish,
I scorn your coarse insinuation,
And have most plentiful occasion
To wish myself the rock I view,
Or such another dolt as you:
For many a grave and learned clerk,
And many a gay unlettered spark,
With curious touch examines me,
If I can feel as well as he;
And when I bend, retire and shrink,
Says—'Well, 'tis more than one would think!'
Thus life is spent (oh fie upon't!)
In being touched, and crying—Don't!"
A poet, in his evening walk,
O'erheard and checked this idle talk.
"And your fine sense," he said, "and yours,
Whatever evil it endures,
Deserves not, if so soon offended,
Much to be pitied or commended.

Disputes, though short, are far too long,
Where both alike are in the wrong;
Your feelings, in their full amount,
Are all upon your own account.
"You in your grotto-work enclosed
Complain of being thus exposed;
Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,
Save when the knife is at your throat,
Wherever driven by wind or tide,
Exempt from every ill beside.
"And as for you my Lady Squeamish,
Who reckon every touch a blemish,
If all the plants that can be found
Embellishing the scene around,
Should droop and wither where they grow,
You would not feel at all—not you.
The noblest minds their virtue prove
By pity, sympathy and love:
These, these are feelings truly fine,
And prove their owner half divine."
His censure reached them as he dealt it,
And each by shrinking shewed he felt it.

THE OLD TREE AND THE GARDENER.

A MAN had an old, barren tree in his garden; it was a large pear-tree, which had formerly been very fruitful, but had grown old; such is the fate of all. The ungrateful gardener resolved to remove it; and one morning took his axe for the purpose. At the first blow, the tree said to him: "Have some regard for my great age, and recollect the fruit that I have borne for you every year. My death is at hand, I have but a moment to live; do not assassinate a dying tree, which has so often been your benefactor."—"I regret being compelled to cut you down," replied the gardener, "but I have need of wood." All at once, a hundred nightingales exclaimed: "Oh! spare it! we have but this one left; when your wife seats herself beneath its shade, we rejoice her with our merry songs; she is often alone, we beguile her solitude."

The gardener drives them away, laughing at their request, and makes a second stroke. A swarm of bees immediately issued from the trunk, saying to him: "Stay your hand, inhuman man, and listen to us; if you leave us this asylum, we will give you every day a delicious honey-comb, which you can carry to the market for sale." Does this appeal affect him?

"I weep with tenderness," replied the avaricious gardener: "what am I not indebted to this unhappy pear-tree, which has nourished me in its youth? My wife often comes to listen to these birds; it is enough for me: let them continue their songs unmolested; and for you, who condescend to augment my wealth, I will sow the whole province with flowers." Thus speaking, he departed, and left the old trunk to repose in peace.

THE TYRANT WHO BECAME A JUST MONARCH.

There was in the eastern part of Egypt a king, whose reign had long been a source of savage tyranny; he had long ruined the rich, and distressed the poor; so that all his subjects, day and night, implored Heaven to be delivered from him. One day, as he returned from hunting, after he had summoned his people together: "Unhappy subjects," said he to them, "my conduct has been long unjustifiable in regard to you: but that tyranny, with which I have governed hitherto, is at an end, and I assure you, from henceforward, you shall live in peace and at ease, and nobody shall dare to oppress you." The people were extremely overjoyed at this good news, and forebore praying against the king.

In a word, this prince made from the time such an alteration in his conduct, that he acquired the title of the Just, and every one began to bless the felicity of his reign.

One day, when his subjects were thus settled in happiness, one of his favourites presuming to ask him the reason of so sudden and so remarkable a change, the king gave him this answer: "As I rode hunting the other day," said he, "I saw a series of accidents, which threw me into a turn of mind that has produced this happy change; which, believe me, cannot give my people more real satisfaction than it does myself. The things that made this change in me were these: I saw a dog in pursuit of a fox, who, after he had overtaken him, bit off the lower part of his leg; however, the fox, lame as he was, made a shift to escape into a hole, and the dog, not being able to get him out, left him there: hardly had he gone, however, a hundred paces, when a man threw a great stone at him and cracked his skull; at the same instant the man run in the way of a horse, that trod upon his foot and lamed him for ever; and soon after, the horse's foot stuck so fast between two stones, that he broke his ancle-bone in striving to get it out. On seeing these sudden misfortunes befal those who had been engaged in doing ill to others, I could not help saying to myself, 'Men are used as they use others: whoever does that which he ought not to do, receives what he is not willing to receive.'"

THE ARCHER.

An archer had an excellent bow made of ebony, which would carry an arrow true to the mark from a great distance. Consequently he held it in great estimation. Once, however, as he considered it attentively, he soliloquized: "You are still a little too thick; and possess no decorations save your polish. What a pity!—But that may be remedied," he pursued. "I will go to the cleverest artist, and let him carve it ornamentally."—Without losing a moment, he set out; the artist carved a complete hunt on the bow; and what could be more appropriate on a weapon of the chase?

The man was rejoiced. "Ah! my dear bow," said he, "you deserve these embellishments!" Wishing again to essay its powers; he spans the bow and snaps it in two.

THE HUSBANDMAN OF CASTILE.

The grandson of a king, rendered great by his very misfortunes, Philip of Spain, without money, troops, or credit, being driven by the English from Madrid, fancied his diadem was lost. He fled almost alone, deploring his misery. Suddenly an old husbandman presents himself to his view, a frank, simple, straightforward man, loving his children and his king, his wife and his country, better than his life; speaking little of virtue, but extensively practising it; rich but beloved; held up as an example for every family in Castile. His coat, made by his daughters, was girded by the skin of a wolf. Under a large hat, his intelligent head displayed a pair of sparkling eyes, and comely features, and his moustachios depended from his upper lip, reaching down to his ruff. A dozen sons followed him, all tall, handsome and vigorous; a mule laden with gold was in the midst of them.

This man with his strange equipage stopped before the king, and said: "Where art thou going? Art thou cast down with a single reverse? Of what use is the advantage the arch-duke has gained over thee? it is thou who wilt reign, for thou art cherished by us. What matters it that Madrid has been retaken from thee? Our love still remains, our bodies shall be thy bucklers; we will perish for thee in the field of honour. Battles are gained by chance; but virtue is necessary to gain our hearts. Thou art in possession of it, and wilt reign. Our money, our lives are thine, take all; thanks to forty years of labour and economy, I am enabled to offer thee this gold. Here are my twelve children, behold in them twelve soldiers, despite my grey hairs I will make the thirteenth; and the war being finished, when thy generals, officers, and great men, come to demand of thee, wealth, honour, ribands, as the price of their services, we will ask but for repose and justice; it is all that we require. We your people furnish the king with blood and treasure, but, far from revelling in his bounty, the less he gives, the more we love him. When thou shalt be happy, we will fly thy presence, we will bless thee in silence; thou art conquered and we seek thee." He said, and fell on his knees; with a paternal hand, Philip raised him, sobbing audibly; he presses this faithful subject in his arms, wishes to speak, but tears interrupt his words.

Soon, according to the prophesy of the good old man, Philip became the conqueror; and, seated on the throne of Iberia, did not forget the husbandman.

The monarch most beloved, is always the most powerful. Fortune in vain endeavours to overwhelm him; in vain do a thousand enemies, leagued against him, seem to presage his destruction as inevitable; the love of his subjects renders their efforts useless.

JUPITER AND MINOS.

"My son," said Jupiter one day to Minos, "expound to me, you who are the judge of the human race, why hell scarcely suffices to contain the numerous souls sent to you by Atropos. What fatal adversary of Virtue corrupts feeble humanity to such a degree? Is it not selfishness?"—"Selfishness? no father." "What then?"—"Idleness."

THE GARDENER AND THE HOG

A GARDENER of peculiar taste
On a young hog his favour plac'd,
Who fed not with the common herd;
His tray was to the hall preferr'd.
He wallow'd underneath the board,
Or in his master's chamber snor'd;
Who fondly strok'd him ev'ry day
And taught him all the puppy's play.
Where'er he went, the grunting friend,
Ne'er fail'd his pleasure to attend.
As on a time the loving pair
Walk'd forth to tend the garden's care,
The master thus address'd the swine;
"My house, my garden, all is thine.
On turnips feast whene'er you please,
And riot in my beans and pease;
If the potatoe's taste delights,
Or the red carrot's sweet invites,
Indulge thy morn and ev'ning hours,
But let due care regard my flow'rs.
My tulips are my garden's pride,
What vast expence those beds supplied!"
The hog by chance one morning roam'd,
Where with new ale the vessel foam'd:
He munches now the steaming grains;
Now with full swill the liquor drains.
Intoxicating fumes arise;
He reels, he rolls his winking eyes;
Then, stagg'ring, through the garden scours,
And treads down painted ranks of flow'rs,
With delving snout he turns the soil,
And cools his palate with the spoil.
The master came, the ruin spied;
"Villain, suspend thy rage!" he cried:
"Hast thou, thou most ungrateful sot!
My charge, my only charge forgot?
What, all my flow'rs!" No more he said,
But gaz'd, and sigh'd, and hung his head.
The hog with stutt'ring speech returns,
"Explain, Sir, why your anger burns.
See there untouch'd, your tulips strewn,
For I devour'd the roots alone."
At this the gard'ner's passion grows;
From oaths and threats he fell to blows.

The stubborn brute the blows sustains,
Assaults his legs and tears his veins.
Ah, foolish swain! too late you find,
That sties were for such friends design'd
Homeward he limps with painful pace,
Reflecting thus on past disgrace:
Who cherishes a brutal mate
Shall mourn the follv soon or late.

THE IGNORANT PHYSICIAN.

In a remote part of the East, a man altogether void of knowledge and experience, presumed to call himself a physician. He was so ignorant, notwithstanding, that he knew not the cholic from the dropsy, nor could he distinguish rhubarb from bezoar. He never visited a patient twice; for his first coming always killed him. On the other hand, there was in the same province another physician of that learning and ability, that he cured the most desperate diseases by the virtue of the several herbs of the country, of which he had a perfect knowledge. Now this learned man became blind, and not being able to visit his patients, at length retired into a desert, there to live at his ease. The ignorant physician no sooner understood that the only man he looked upon with an envious eye, was retired out of the way, but he began boldly to display his ignorance under the opinion of manifesting his knowledge. One day the king's daughter fell sick, upon which the knowing physician was sent for; because, that besides he had already served the court, people were convinced that he was much more able than he that went about to set himself up in this pompous manner. The learned physician being in the princess's chamber, and understanding the nature of her disease, ordered her to take a certain pill composed of such ingredients as he prescribed. Presently they asked him where such and such drugs were to be had. "Formerly," answered the physician, "I have seen them in such and such boxes in the king's treasury; but what confusion there may have been since among those boxes I know not." Upon this the ignorant physician pretended that he knew the drugs very well, and that he also knew where to find and how to make use of them. "Go then," said the king, "to my treasury, and take what is requisite." Away went the ignorant physician, and fell to searching for the box; but because many of the boxes were alike, and that he knew not the drugs when he saw them, he was not able to determine. On the whole, however, he rather chose, in the puzzle of his judgment, to take a box at a venture than to acknowledge his ignorance. But he never considered that they who meddle with what they understand not, are generally constrained to an early repentance; for in the box which he had picked out, there was a most exquisite poison, of which he made his pills, which he caused the princess to take, who died immediately after; being informed of this, the king commanded the ignorant physician to be apprehended and condemned to death.

This example, teaches us, that no man ought to say or do a thing which he understands not.

DON QUIXOTE.

Compelled to renounce chivalry, Don Quixote resolved, in order to indemnify himself, to lead a quiet life, and made choice of that of a shepherd. Fancy the hero of La Mancha with a satchel and crook; a little, jaunty straw hat trimmed with ribbon, and tied under his chin with a bow. Judge of this new Philander's air! On a worn out pair of bagpipes, he tries to awaken the sweet echoes: he buys two sheep of the butcher, takes a lean and mangy cur, and thus equipped, sallies out one cold winter's morning, dispersing his flock on the banks of the Tagus, and singing in praise of spring and its flowers, with the snow a foot deep on the ground. So far, so good: let every one enjoy himself his own way. Presently came by a blowsy milk-maid; and our Corydon impelled by love, hastens to throw himself at her feet. "O lovely Timaretta!" cried he; "you who are distinguished among your youthful sisters as a lily amongst other flowers; adored and cruel object of my secret flame, abandon, for a moment the care of your lambs; come with me, and see a nest of young turtle-doves that I have discovered in a hollow oak. If you will deign to accept them, they are yours; alas! they are all I have to offer you. In colour, the young doves are white, Timaretta, emblems of yourself; but unhappily for me, their heart is not yours." Timaretta, whose real name was Annette, stared at this address, and was gazing on the ancient Celadon with stupid and astonished eyes, when a serving-man from the neighbouring farm, her lover, chanced to pass near the spot; and falling on the tender and faithful swain, he stretched him at full length on the snow. "Pause, brutal and ignorant hay-maker!" cried Don Quixote; "are you ignorant of our laws? Timaretta's heart must become the prize of a pastoral combat. Stay your rash hand, and sing." The Don's entreaties were disregarded; the incensed countryman continued to belabour him, and did not desist till he was compelled, by intercessors attracted to the spot, by the quondam knight's cries.

It often happens that we only renounce one folly, to adopt another equally ridiculous or unworthy.

THE ASS AND THE GARDENER.

An ass, had once by some accident lost his tail, which was a grievous affliction to him; and as he was every where seeking after it, being fool enough to think he could get it set on again, he passed through a meadow, and afterwards got into a garden. The gardener seeing him, and not able to endure the mischief he was doing in trampling down his plants, fell into a violent rage, ran to the ass, and never standing on the ceremony of a pillory, cut off both his ears, and beat him out of the ground. Thus the ass, who bemoaned the loss of his tail, was in far greater affliction when he saw himself without ears: and depend on it, that, in general, whoever he be that takes not reason for his guide, wanders about, and at length falls over precipices.

LEARNING AND COMMON SENSE.

There were four Brahmins residing in the same village; all intimate friends. Three were men of great acquirements, but destitute of common sense. The fourth was an intelligent fellow, but equally destitute of learning. As they were all poor, they determined at one of their meetings to go to some country where learning was patronized, and where, they were satisfied, they should speedily be enriched by presents from the king. They accordingly set off; but when they had gone some way, the eldest cried out, "It never before occurred to me that our fourth friend here is illiterate. He is a man of sense to be sure, but that will not entitle him to any rewards from the king, we shall have, therefore, to relinquish to him a part of our earnings, and it would, I think be fairer for him to remain at home." The second agreed in this opinion; but the third opposed it, saying: "We have always been friends and companions from infancy; let him therefore participate in the wealth we shall acquire." This sentiment prevailed, and they all went on in harmony.

As they passed through the forest, they saw the scattered bones of a dead lion. "I have met," said one, "with an account of a method by which beings can be reanimated. What say you, shall we try the experiment and employ the energies of science to restore life and shape to these bones?" They agreed; one undertook to put the bones together; the second, to supply the skin, flesh, blood and integuments; and the other to communicate life to the figure. When the two first had accomplished their tasks, the third was about to begin his, but the fourth stopped him: "Consider what you are going to do," he exclaimed, "if you give life to the lion, the consequence will be, that he will devour us."—"Away blockhead," replied the sage, "I am not to project things in vain."—"Wait an instant, then," replied the man of sense, "till I get up into this tree." So saying, he climbed up into a tree at hand, while his learned associates accomplished their undertaking. A substantial living lion was soon formed, which fell upon the three philosophers and destroyed them. When he was gone, the man of common sense descended from his hiding place, and reached home again in safety.

THE ROBIN AND THE WHITE MOUSE.

While sitting round the social table,
It often has been found that Fable
A moral lesson would convey,
In that insinuating way,
That all have felt it to be true,
Which graver themes had failed to do ·
And truth was deemed not less a prize
Because it came in motley guise
  A robin, in a golden cage,
Which oft attention did engage,

Was warbling sweet his matin lay,
Hailing the glorious god of day;
When a white mouse came strolling by,
Who stopped and gazed with curious eye,
And as the pretty bird he prized,
Thus pensively soliloquized:—
"Ah happy bird! well may'st thou sing,
Thy perch a throne, thyself a king;
Provided with the choicest fare,
Secure from every anxious care,
From fatal gun, and treacherous snare;
By every lady-fair carest,
No wonder thou'rt so very blest,
In gorgeous palace domiciled,
While I am doomed to wander wild;
Compelled to keep a sharp look out,
When whiskered foemen prowl about!
And scamper, when I see the scowl,
Of that most hideous bird—the owl,
And oft my hunger must appease
With candle-ends and mouldy cheese!"
An urchin who with wondering grin,
Had oft observed his snowy skin,
At length allured mouse in a snare,
With toasted cheese—that tempting fare;
And then to keep his heart from dudgeon,
Gave him the best of board and lodging;
A cage adorned with golden wires,
Which every gazing eye admires;
And food abundant, rich, and nice,
The daintiest palate would suffice:
So that the state he had admired,
With yearning envy, e'en desired,
Was glittering now around, before him,
But still a loneliness came o'er him,
He thought of all the freaks he'd had,
With his companions gay and glad;
When through the fields he wandered free,
And squeaked and gambol'd merrily;
These joys he oft in thought would trace,
Within his narrow dwelling-place;
Whose grandeur mocked his lonely lot,
As sunlight doth a barren spot.
At length the bird of crimson breast,
The moping captive thus addrest:

"Poor mouse! how many, prone to flaunt,
Thy folly and thy fate would taunt;
But I'll teach thee to sympathize
With my lost freedom of the skies;
My splendid home you did admire,
And little dreamed how soon 'twould tire,
Ah! when you heard me tuneful sing,
T'was not the raptures of the wing,
I only sung to wile away
The long and weary hours of day;
And chase those thoughts that would intrude,
To make more sad my solitude.
Now by experience learn to know,
That most of life's best joys below,
From simplest sources purest flow.
Tis not the splendour of the dome,
That can impart the bliss of home.
Despite the prate of cunning elves,
True pleasure lies within ourselves;
'Tis wisdom's rule to be content
With aught of good by fortune sent;
Improve, enjoy whate'er we have,
Nor for another's portion crave;
This gives that sunshine to the breast,
Without which none are truly blest!"

THE DANCING BEAR.

A BEAR, who had for a long time gained his living by dancing, at length escaped from his master, and returned to his former companions in the woods. His brethren welcomed him with the most friendly growls. The traveller now related what he had seen in foreign countries, told a long history of his adventures, and, to exhibit his feats of agility, began, in an erect position, to figure the Polonaise dance. His brethren, who were spectators of the performance, were astonished at his grace, and endeavoured to imitate his ballet steps. It was in vain; no sooner were they raised on two legs, than they fell again upon all fours. Seeing their awkwardness, Bruin proceeded to exhibit some higher displays of his art, which, at length, rendered the others so envious of his extraordinary feats, that they drove him from their society.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

"SING to me, dearest nightingale," said a shepherd to the silent songstress one beautiful spring evening.

"Alas!" said the nightingale, "the frogs make so much noise, that I have no inclination to sing. Do you not hear them?"

"Undoubtedly I hear them," replied the shepherd, "but it is owing to your silence."

THE ARROGANT MULE.

THE lion gave a feast to several of the beasts of the plain. The horse, the ox, the ass, the dog, the sheep and the goat were invited. The horse and the ass sent excuses; the one having to bear his master a journey, and the other to turn the mill for the housewife; but in order to honour the hospitality of the Forest King, they sent their son, the mule, in their stead. At table a dispute arose about precedence; the mule claiming the highest place in right of his parent the horse: which the ox, and afterwards all the other animals, disputed, asserting that the mule had no just pretensions to the dignity contended for. At length, when argument ran higher, the mule would fain have been content with the seat reserved for the ass; but even this was now denied him, as a punishment for his presumption; and he was thrust to the lower end of the cavern in which dinner was served, as one who, instead of meriting consideration, was nothing but a base mongrel, and a blot upon nature.

THE WOLF, THE FOX, THE RAVEN, AND THE CAMEL.

A CRAFTY raven, a subtle fox, and a rapacious wolf, put themselves into the service of a lion, that held his court in a wood, near a certain not much frequented highway. Near this place, a merchant's camel once, quite tired with long travel, got rid of his burden, and lay down to rest himself, and, if possible, preserve his life. In a few days after, having recovered his strength, he rose, and ignorant of the governor of these territories, entered into the lion's wood with a design to feed. But, before he had spent an hour in travelling into it, he was astonished with the appearance of the lion, whose majestic gait and aspect soon informed our traveller that he was monarch of the place. The camel, who at first sight expected nothing but to be devoured, was rejoiced to find this, and humbly offered him his service. The lion accepted it; and, after he knew by what accident he came into the place, asked him what he would choose to do? "Whatever your majesty pleases," replied the camel, very submissively. "Thou art at thy liberty," replied the lion, "to return, if thou likest it, and be the slave of thy former master; or if thou wilt rather live with me, thou hast my sacred and inviolable promise that thou shall be secure from all injuries." The camel was very glad of this, and remained with the lion, doing nothing but feed without disturbance, so that he soon became plump and fat.

One day after this, the lion, in hunting, met an elephant, with whom he encountered; and, returning wounded to the wood, at length he was starved to death. While he lay on his death-bed, however, the raven, the wolf, and the fox, who lived only upon what the lion left after he had been at the field, fell into a deep melancholy; which the lion perceiving, said to them, "I am more sorry for your sadness than for my own wounds. Go, and see if you can meet with any venison in the parlieus adjoining; if you do, return and give me notice, and, notwithstanding my wounds, I will go and seize it for you." Upon this, away they went, left the lion, and held a council all three together. The wolf said, "If I may speak among you, friends, what good does this camel do here? We have no

correspondence with, nor does the lion get any thing by him? let us kill him, and he will keep us alive for two or three days, and by that time the king may, perhaps, be cured of his wounds." This advice, however, though hunger pleaded much in its favour, did not please the fox, who affirmed that the camel's life could not justly be taken away, since the lion had given his word and solemn promise that he should live unmolested in the wood; for that such an action would render the king odious to all posterity, who would look upon him as a perfidious monarch, who gave protection to a stranger in his dominions, only to put him to death without cause, whenever he could make an advantage by his destruction.

On this the raven, who had as hungry a belly as the wolf, together with a great deal of wit and as much malice, took upon him to reconcile both these opinions, saying, that there might be a fair pretence found to colour the death of the camel. "Stay here," continued he, "till I return, and I will bring you the lion's consent for his destruction." So saying, away he went to the lion; and, when he came into his presence, making a profound reverence, and putting on a starved and meagre look, said, "May it please your Majesty to hear me a few words: we are almost famished to death, and so weak, that we can hardly crawl along; but we have found out a remedy for all this, and, if your majesty will but give leave, have contrived how we shall have a feast." "What is your remedy?" answered the lion, hardly able to open his jaws for weakness and anguish; "and what the feast you propose yourselves?" To whom the raven replied, "Sir, the camel, whom you once met with in the wood, lives like a hermit in your kingdom; he never comes near us, nor is he good for anything but to satisfy our hunger. And, in regard, your majesty wants good and wholesome diet in your present weak condition, I am surgeon enough to venture to assure you, that camel's flesh must be very proper for you." The lion who was of a truly noble disposition, was highly incensed at this proposal of the raven, and very passionately exclaimed, "Oh! what a wicked and treacherous age is this! Vile and cunning as you are, for I have long known you Corvo," thus was the raven called; "how can all your sophistry prove it lawful in a king to be faithless, and violate ascertained promises?" "Sir," replied the raven, "far be it from me to attempt to prove that; but, may it please your Majesty, I cannot but remember, upon this most urgent occasion, that great casuists hold it for a maxim, that a single person may be sacrificed to the welfare of a whole nation. Or, should not this be entirely satisfactory to your Majesty, perhaps there may be some expedient found to disengage you from your promise." Upon that the lion bowed down his head with fatigue and anguish, as if to consider of it, and the raven returned to his companions, to whom he related what discourse had passed between the king and himself. "And now," said he, "let us go to the camel, and inform him of the unfortunate accident that has befallen the king, and of his being likely to starve; and then lay before him, that since we have spent the greater part of our lives in peace and plenty under the king's reign, it is but just, that some of us now should surrender up our own, to prolong his days. In pursuance of this discourse, we will engage the camel to accompany us, and go to the king and offer him our three carcases; striving, at the same time, which shall be most free of his flesh to serve his majesty for his present nourishment. The camel, perhaps, will then be willing to follow our example,

and offer to sacrifice himself in the same manner, and then we will take him at his word." This they all readily agreed to; and, in short, acted their parts so well, that they took the camel with them to the king, to whom the raven thus addressed himself. "Sir," said he, "seeing your health is of much more consequence to the public good, and more precious to us than our own lives, suffer me to shew the just sense I have of my duty, by offering up my own body to you, to appease your raging hunger."—"What a goodly collation you offer to his Majesty!" cried the fox, well instructed in the part he was to act in this design; "you that have only a little skin, and three or four dry bones, are a precious bit to satisfy the king, who, I warrant you, could feed at this time like a glutton after a three days' fast. I have better flesh, and more substantial than yours, and have so much true sense of my duty, as I hope every one of his Majesty's subjects has, especially those who, like us, have tasted of his favours, that I am as desirous as yourself to approve my gratitude and love to my sovereign." And, turning to the lion, "Sir," said he, "let me entreat your Majesty to eat me." After these, the wolf played his part. "Sir," said he, "your majesty must have more solid diet to refresh your hungry stomach than these can afford you, and I think myself a banquet much more proper to regale you." The camel, on this, unwilling to appear less affectionate than the rest, when it came to his turn, "All you three," said he, "are not enough to satisfy the king's hunger; but, though he had not eaten a mouthful these three days, I alone am sufficient to restore him to his health." Then said all the rest, "This camel speaks reason; his flesh is excellent, dainty, and worth your Majesty's taste. How happy will he be to leave to posterity such an example of zeal and generosity!" And, so saying, they all fell upon him, and tore him to pieces, before he could speak another word.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

Friendship, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame,
The child, whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendship; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.
A hare, who in a civil way
Complied with ev'ry thing, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train
Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain.
Her care was, never to offend;
And ev'ry creature was her friend.
As forth she went, at early dawn,
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies;
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath,
She hears the near advance of death;

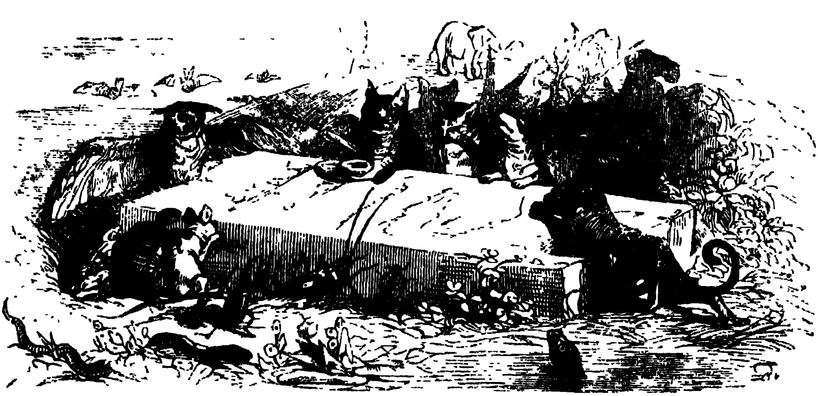
She doubles to mislead the hound
And measures back her mazy round;
Till, fainting in the public way
Half-dead with fear she gasping lay.
What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the horse appear'd in view!
"Let me," says she, "your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight;
To friendship ev'ry burthen's light."
The horse replied, "Poor honest Puss!
It grieves my heart to see thee thus:
Be comforted, relief is near;
For all your friends are in the rear."
She next the stately bull implor'd,
And thus replied the mighty lord;
"Since ev'ry beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offence, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend.
Love calls me hence; a fav'rite cow
Expects me near yon barley-mow;
And when a lady's in the case.
You know all other things give place,
To leave you thus might seem unkind;
But see, the goat is just behind."
The goat remark'd her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye;
"My back," says he, "may do you harm;
The sheep's at hand, and wool is warm."
The sheep was feeble, and complain'd
His sides a load of wool sustain'd:
Said he was slow, confess'd his fears,
For hounds eat sheep as well as hares.
She now the trotting calf address'd,
To save from death a friend distress'd,
"Shall I," says he, "of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler pass'd you by;
How strong are these! how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me, then. You know my heart,
But dearest friends, alas! must part.
How shall we all lament! Adieu!
For see, the hounds are just in view."

THE TWO GARDENERS.

Two brothers who were gardeners, had a piece of land for their inheritance, of which each cultivated the half; united by a strict friendship they had everything in common. One of them, named John, of an inquisitive mind, and some oratorical powers, thought himself a great philosopher; therefore Mr. John passed his time in reading the almanac, in observing the weather, the weathercock, and the wind. Presently, giving the rein to his sublime genius, he wished to discover how such millions of peas could be so quickly produced from a single one; and wherefore the seed of the linden, which produces a large tree, should be smaller than the bean, which attains but two feet in height; and again, by what mysterious secret this bean, which is heedlessly sown in the earth, contrives to attain a proper position in its bosom, so as to shoot out a root below, while it elevates its stem above the surface.

While he is thus meditating and afflicting himself at not being able to penetrate these important secrets, he forgets to water his garden; his spinach and lettuces die for want of moisture; the north-wind kills his fig-trees, which he neglects to cover up. No fruit is sent to market, no money comes to his purse; and the poor philosopher, with his almanacs, has no resource but his brother.

The latter was at work from the first dawn of day, singing at the top of his lungs; he grafted, and watered everything, from the peach-tree to the currant-bush; without caring to discover that which he could not comprehend, he continued to sow, in order that he might reap. Consequently his garden thrived to a miracle; he had money, fruit and pleasure. It was he who supported his brother; and when Mr. John, in astonishment, came to ask him how he was so successful, "Brother," said he, "here is the whole secret; I work, and you reflect; which is the more profitable? You are racking your mind, while I am enjoying myself; which of us is the wiser?



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